

Isaiah 53

Sunday 4/24/2011

I personally think that is wonderful. I am not fighting it today; I think that is great. But to me, personally, and I grew up in church and I grew up as a young man studying for the ministry, I was taught, and I still believe it today, that there has never been a pageant, there has never been a play, there has never been a drama, there has never been a sunrise service. Many churches will meet out at 6:30 AM, before the sun comes up, and they kind of get in the mood. It is like it was before in the Bible, when it was dark early in the morning and the sun came up.

Most people have lost the impact of it. I asked a child this week, "What does the resurrection of Christ mean to you?" He said, "Well, when Christ came out of the tomb, He saw a shadow, went back in, and it was six more weeks of winter." I said, "No, that is not the same thing. That is Groundhog Day you are thinking of."

All around this world today, people are trying to get in the mood, get in the feeling of Him coming out of that tomb. Personally, I do not think there has ever been a pageant, there has never been a play, there will ever be a drama, there will be a sunrise service, or some pathetic little sermon that could ever take the place of preaching on the death of Christ.

In the Bible, there are just some things that demand to be preached. I know you can teach, and I know that I teach, and I know there are things to teach about, but there are certain things in the Bible that just need the emphasis of preaching. A couple of weeks ago, I preached a message on the seven things that you lose when you lose your Bible. One of those things, if you remember, was the power in preaching. I think that is what is missing today in Christianity: there is no power in preaching. There is a lot of drama, there are a lot of plays, there is a lot of pageantry that goes on, but there is no real passion, there is no real power. Power comes from preaching.

In Christianity, all through history, it has been about preachers and preaching. When the Roman Catholic Church lost its grip, when the Reformation took place, the Reformation was a turning point for the whole world. Most people do not even understand that. But one man single-handedly turned the whole thing around and started what we know today as the great Philadelphia Church period. He did it by preaching. Martin Luther was not a great theologian. Martin Luther did not have all of his doctrines straight, but Martin Luther was a great preacher. When he preached, it changed the world.

We look at our own country, and we have talked about it many, many times, how the Founding Fathers, our Constitution, our Declaration of Independence, and the very foundation by which our country sits on today, were shaped by preaching. Not by teaching, but by the preaching of two of the greatest preachers that the world has ever seen: Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield. They literally shaped all of the aspects of where this country started and where it was going.

In the 1800s, around the 1880s, there were two great preachers who preached. They did not teach; they preached. They were two of the greatest preachers the world has ever seen: D.L. Moody and Spurgeon. Those two men were great preachers. Back then, in a time in this country,

people wanted men to preach to them. People desired to hear preaching. The New York Times and every newspaper across this country, I told you this Thursday night, actually printed on Monday morning every word of Moody and Spurgeon's sermons that they had preached on the following Sunday. It is an incredible thing. Why we ever think that some play or some pageant, and I am not fighting it, could take the place of preaching and preachers who will preach, who will paint the picture, convey the burden, I do not understand it. Twenty-six times in your New Testament, it makes references to preachers and preaching.

Do not get me wrong today, I understand all this, and I am sure you do too. I realize that Easter is a day, like Christmas, that many, many people come to church who never come any other time. There may be people here today who do not know the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Savior. Maybe you are here today and somebody invited you, maybe you are here today because you came to be with your children, or you came with a friend. I do not know where you have come from or what your circumstances are, but it would be hard today, in the day and age that we live in, to have a crowd this size, or really a crowd any size, where there was not somebody out there who probably did not know the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Savior.

I want to say something to you. I understand Easter. I understand the pageantry. I understand the pomp and circumstance. I understand all the tradition that goes along with it, but I also want you to understand this, and I understand this: I am not missing the opportunity today to preach about the greatest event in the history of the world, when my Savior came down and died on the cross and literally changed the course on planet Earth. If you think I am going to give that over to a pageant or to a play, or if you think I do not have the power and the passion to preach it, you are in the wrong place, pal. You are going to find something different here. I believe what Jesus did. I believe that it changed my life, and I believe that it will change your life, and I believe the Bible is very clear on the power of preaching.

How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

You would not even know there was a gospel. You would not even know there was salvation. If someplace down the line, God did not ordain men who stood in a pulpit, and they did not teach, they did not give some kind of oratory, they preached the Word of God.

So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

Paul says, "I am ready to preach the gospel." Are you a preacher? Yes, I am. Well, then preach. That is what God has called you to do.

For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

When you teach, you use words. When you teach, you talk about words of wisdom, but when you preach, you paint the picture with the passion and the power that God gives you to do it, and that is what is missing today. We make the Word of God of none effect. We make His death of none effect. You know why? Because nothing affects you like preaching. You know why? Because that is what God intended, and nothing will take its place.

For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God.

Are you saved this morning? Amen. Are you saved this morning? Amen. Are you saved this morning? Amen. Well, then it says, "unto us that are saved, the preaching is the power of God." That is where it is at.

I will tell you why preachers do not preach today: because we live in a world that thinks that preaching is foolishness. Preachers do not want to make a fool out of themselves. They want to be respectable. They want to be doctors of divinity. They want to be PhDs. That is a post-hole digger. They want to have all the great adoration of the world and have the respect. When you get into a pulpit and you take this old Bible and you start preaching, and you start telling it like it is, calling it what it is, you are not going to be very popular. Popularity in Christianity is the key today. Being popular is very popular. But it says, "for the preaching of the cross to them that perish foolishness."

For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; But hath in due time manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour.

I am going to preach to you this morning. It is Easter Sunday. We want to have an Easter service, and we are going to do it about the resurrection. That is fine with me. But we are going to do it justice, and we are going to do it so it pleases the Lord. I understand this: I love you today, and I am glad you are here. But I am not interested in pleasing you today. I am interested in pleasing the One that died for me on Calvary's cross. I am going to preach to you. I am going to paint you a picture with words, God's words. If the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, is God's plan, and it is, then I am going to take some of those words, think of those words as colors, and I am going to paint you a picture with those colors.

I am going to preach to you this morning on the five different ways, the five different ways that you and I should view Christ's death on the cross. I wonder today, do you have any idea how this event of Christ dying on the cross changed and impacted the world? You have heard me say many, many times that the center of history, the focus of history, is the Bible. All history revolves around the Bible. The Bible is the center of all history. There has never been any culture, any city, any nation that has not risen or fallen on its attitude toward the Bible down through history.

In reference to the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, let me just say this: there is no single man that ever changed the world or impacted it like Christ did at His death. When He came and died on the cross, it literally turned the world on its ear. It changed everything in the course of direction of mankind. That is why the Bible says in:

Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and

things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

That is some name you have there. That is some name you have. No man in the history of the world ever changed or impacted the world by his death more than the Lord Jesus Christ. Oh, I know the arguments. Somebody out there will say, "Well, Mohammed was a prophet, Buddha was a prophet, Confucius was a prophet, Jesus was a prophet. They are all the same." Really? If that is true, how come there is only one name that is exalted above every other name? And that name is Jesus. Imagine trusting and believing one of these counterfeit phonies when every day, every day, you have in your face that name of Jesus everywhere you go. Why, even the unsaved men and women, when they want to add power or weight to their speech, and they want to pretend like they have some authority, they do not curse in Buddha's name. They do not curse in Confucius' name. They do not curse in Mohammed's name. No, they call the name that is the highest name, the greatest name of authority on this planet. His name is Jesus. You do not even figure it out.

Somebody says, "How do you know that Jesus is not really truly the Son of God?" I know the way He was by the way the world hates Him. I know that He is the true Son of God, and it is all true because of the way that you can burn a Bible, and nobody cares. You burn a Quran, and the world goes up in flames. I know that He was the true Son of God by the way God's people treat Him. At Guantanamo Bay right now, when the federal government takes all these detainees that want to destroy this country and kill you and bring in peace on good Earth by killing everybody, the first thing your federal government, paid by your tax dollar, does is give them a copy of the Quran. Your own child cannot go to school and carry their Bible and read it and have Bible study without getting kicked out of school. And you want to tell me, ask me which one is the real one?

Let me ask you a question. How much does it take when you wake up in the middle of the night and you stumble into the kitchen and you turn on the lights, and there are 500 cockroaches scattering for the dark? You go into the bathroom, turn on the light, there are 200 cockroaches running all over the place. You go down into your basement, turn on the light, and there are 5,000 cockroaches running everywhere. You go back to your bedroom and turn on the light, there are cockroaches all over your bed. What does it take for you to realize and understand you have a cockroach issue? When you go through this life, and every place you go, you hear about Jesus, good or bad. You hear His name. You see everything in the world revolving around Him, all through history, the present, and the future. What does it take before you finally realize that the real issue in this world is Jesus? He is the One. He is the One.

All history falls on either side of His birth. Before the cross, they called it BC. That is Before Christ. After He is dead, they say AD. Everybody thinks that means After Death. That is not what it means. That is a Latin term for "in the year of our Lord." You know what you have there? Every unsaved man on this planet for 2,000 years used BC and AD, built and tinged around time about one Man coming and dying and resurrecting. I do not care if they are lost, they may be in hell, but when they looked at dates on their calendar or they studied history, it was BC or AD. AD means "in the year of our Lord." You ever figure out what they are saying? BC means Before Christ, but from the crucifixion on, AD, "in the year of our Lord," time is dated that that may be

the year He comes. It is "in the year of our Lord." Time is figured on where before He was born, and then every year after that, this might be the year He comes.

In the printing business, in the newspaper business, they have different stages of type. When the Jayhawks beat Missouri or Missouri beats the Jayhawks, they have in the sports big bold type. When some disaster, oh, they put big type. When not so bad, they give it little type. Do you know what the greatest type in the printing industry, in the newspaper, for the last 500 years, when they started, got the printing press? Do you know what they call the greatest, boldest type that they can put on any newspaper that gives the biggest headlines? They call it "Second Coming type." The newspapers, run by unsaved men, recognize that the biggest news story that demands the biggest title on the newspaper is the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. You have the right One.

Lately, though, they have changed BC and AD. Now it is BCE, "Before Common Era," whatever that means. And then it is BP, "Before Present." That is anytime before anything but just what has stood for 2,000 years. Tell me what man on the planet impacted this old world to the point and to the degree that across this world, they set aside one day, one day, to meet in His honor and preach about Him and who He was and teach His Word. One day, one day. It goes back to the book of Acts where they first met on the first day of the week after the resurrection. It has been that way around the world. The truth is, God, the proof of the pudding is you here today. The two times that everybody will go to church, Easter and Christmas, you can bet on a great crowd. You can bet on everybody in their spiritual pilgrimage. They do not have enough money to go to Jerusalem. They come to this church and they move their way in, and they come to churches all around this city today, like gigantic caravans, like pilgrimages going there on Christmas and on Easter.

Christmas is, and I understand Easter is now, and Christmas, December 25th. Those two dates have been burned into, recognized by every man on planet Earth down through the history of man. Does anybody know Buddha's death? Does anybody know the date that Muhammad was born? Does anybody know the date that Muhammad died? Does anybody care? Why is it that this Man named Jesus impacted the world, and everybody knows His birth and His death date? The rest of them, nobody even pays any attention to. I will tell you why: because there is one name given among men, and His death impacted the whole world.

I want to bring you a message this morning, Easter Sunday. Let me say that I understand what Easter is. I do not get caught up in it. I understand the word Easter is the word Ashtar. Ashtar was the Roman god of fertility. When Constantine brought all the pagans into the church and the Roman Catholic Church divided it all, put it all together, they brought in a lot of pagan holidays and put it all together. Easter and the Bible have never coincided in any way, shape, or form. It may be the same time that the resurrection took place, but that is where it ends. Christ was not born on December 25th. Sorry, do not go kill your shanty-cloth suit. Do not kill your Easter bunny rabbit. Keep it going, but understand where it is. I do not believe any of that stuff, and I am preaching you a nice Easter message today. Happy Easter.

Now, I want to talk about the five ways that you and I should view and understand Christ's death on the cross, five different ways. Most of you know this: in the Bible, certain numbers, certain things. In the Bible, you are going to find that five is a number of death. You say, "Where do you get that?" Well, the first man in the Bible dies in Genesis 5:5. In the Old Testament, they used to kill them by stabbing them under the fifth rib. When Jesus died on the cross, if you count them up, He had five wounds in His body. You are going to find that all God's angels, Michael, Gabriel, they all have seven letters in their name. Lucifer was once one of God's cherubs. He has seven letters in his name. He fell and became the devil. We know him as the devil and Satan. Devil has five letters in it. He is death. Jesus has five letters in it. You ever notice when He was born, He was wrapped in swaddling clothes? Swaddling clothes are grave clothes. That little baby was born to die. We are going to talk about His death here in a little bit.

We have Romans 5:1. We gave it to your kids in the memory verse.

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

You ever study those words? You ever study peace, grace, faith? All have five letters in them. You know how you get those three things? By Him dying on the cross. So you are going to see that. You are going to see that. It carries over into the world. I do not know if you know it or not, but the standard emergency signal for all aircraft and everybody flying around is 500 megacycles. When a Navy ship goes dead in the water, it is called a number five shutdown. When an airplane pilot gets into trouble, wherever he is at, and he is going to have a distress signal, he wants to call for help, and it looks like there is going to be an impending disaster, everybody is going to die, he flips that little mic switch and he yells into the mic, "Mayday, Mayday, Mayday." January, February, March, April, May, fifth month. You will not get around the book.

Our first viewpoint that I want to talk about, there are five of them here. You do remember when the rich man in hell, in Luke chapter 16, was down there, do not you? He is in hell. How many brothers did he have? Five. See that thing? Five. Not looking good for those five brothers.

I. The World's View of Christ's Death

1.) Our first viewpoint will be how the world looks at Jesus Christ. I do not know if you know how the Bible lays itself out all the time, but in the Old Testament, Egypt is a picture of the world system. In the New Testament, that picture is Rome. They are both great political systems that viewed God the same way. They are the world system, and we live in the world system today, which views God the exact same way. You need to understand it. Both of them, and today, the world system hates Him and His Word. You are going to find that all across this country, you are going to find, especially in Europe, that there is no need for God whatsoever. They have absolutely no need for God.

There is a great verse in 1 Timothy 6:13, and it says this:

I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession;

You know what you have there? You have a picture in John chapter 18 of Christ standing before Pontius Pilate, who represents the Roman Empire, who represents the great picture of the world. You have a picture there of what our witness should be before the world, and you have a great picture of how the world viewed Jesus Christ in type. It is incredible.

There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand.

Man in the world system will come up with every device it can, every idea, every -ology, every philosophy, everything at its means and its grasp to get around who Jesus Christ was, but they cannot get around it. The world will always look at Christ and His death as a threat to their system. The world, the Roman Empire, the world today, looked at Christ and His death on the cross as just another religious martyr. They just lumped Him in with everybody else. They thought He was a rebel. They thought He was a seditionist. They thought He was a cult leader. They thought He was a right-wing conservative. They thought He was a right-wing extremist. If He had lived today, He would be part of the Tea Party. They would have marked Him with that. He had revolution ideas that would bring down the established government system. Boy, did they ever have that one right. The world was against Him everywhere. The world is against Him today.

I have a little something here I got. I like to read all these magazines. This is from the Patriot Magazine, 1991. Big headline: "The World Against Christ."

If Jesus were alive today, He would be arrested on the following charges by the following government agencies:

First of all, the FBI would arrest Him for teaching people a higher power than their government.

The IRS would be after Him for failure to report income.

The CIA would be after Him for causing political unrest.

The FDA would be after Him for turning water to wine without a license.

The EPA would be after Him for preaching to a crowd of over 5,000 people without a permit and endangering the environment.

The DNR, that is the Division of Natural Resources, would be after Him for fishing without a license.

The ATF would be after Him for telling people to sell their coats and buy a sword.

The NCC, that is the National Council of Churches, they would be after Him for teaching a doctrine not approved by the National Council of Churches.

The NEA, that is the National Education Association, would be after Him for teaching without proper accreditation and proper certification.

The AMA, American Medical Association, would be after Him for practicing medicine without a license.

The MHA, the Mental Health Association, would be after Him for healing minds without a state-certified degree in psychology.

The Department of Justice would be after Him for exposing corruption in the government and causing unrest.

And the Coast Guard would be after Him for walking on water without a life jacket.

That is where you are at. That is the mindset of this world. That is where it is at. Pilate represents that. Pilate, in every sense of the word, represents how the world's system is. Do you ever study Pontius Pilate? I have a great message I preached for years and years and years called "Pilate, Man in a Mess." I do not know if you know it or not, but Pilate's problem was the same problem the world has. If you are here this morning and you are not saved, you are part of the world's system. You may be against it. You may not like it. You may be against the government and all that goes on and the corruption. You may be a good, stand-up type of guy. But the bottom line is, if you are not saved and you are not His child, then you are part of the world's system. It is just that simple.

When you come down there, you see Pontius Pilate, his problem was the same problem the world has. And the same problem you have if you are not saved. He had Jesus on his hands. When you look at Pilate's life, when he is faced with Jesus and who He was, and what he had to do, he tried four ways to get rid of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is an amazing study because those four ways are the exact four ways that the world tries to get rid of Him. And they are the exact four ways that before I got saved, I tried to get rid of Him. And they are the exact four ways, if you are unsaved here this morning, you will try to get rid of Him.

They bring out Jesus to Pontius Pilate and bring Him in there. He says, "What is the big deal? What is this guy all about?" The Jews say, "By our law, He ought to die." You know what Pilate did? He said, "Well, if that is the case, by your law, He ought to die, then you take Him and you judge Him." A lot of people are like that. You start to talk about the Lord, "Well, I have never killed anybody, and I have never done this, and I never did that." The Bible says that you could keep the whole law and break it at one point, you are guilty of it all. He tried carelessness.

After carelessness did not work, he tried cowardice; he tried to pass the buck. He got into a little discussion and he said, "Well, where is He from?" And he said, "Well, He is from Herod's jurisdiction." You know what he said? "Great, send Him to Herod." He tried to pass Him off to Herod. You know what Herod did? Herod talked with Him, Herod had Him whipped, kicked around a little bit, and Herod questioned Him. You know what Herod finally did with Him? When Herod could not get Him, he sent Him right back to Pontius Pilate, and he had Him on his hands again. There are some things you just cannot get around in this world, folks, and one of them is Jesus. Try as you will, the world system will try it. They tried carelessness, they tried cowardice.

Then the next thing he tried, he tried cleverness. He is sitting up there and he said, "What am I going to do? Oh, I know what I will do. I will get Barabbas. I will get Barabbas and I will take him out there, and these are good people, you know, they just want to see a little blood. They

want me to rough Him up a little bit. I will just get Barabbas. He is an old thief, you know, and we will get him up there and I will take him out there and we will give him Barabbas. We will crucify him. We will let Him go." You know what? It did not work for him. He took Him out there and he said, "Which one of these guys do you want?" They chose Barabbas, and he had Him on his hands again. If you are unsaved here this morning or you are part of the world, let me tell you something, folks. The biggest issue you have is a Man named Jesus, and you are never going to get rid of Him. You are never going to get Him out because that name is above every name, and when He came, He impacted the world, and you are not going to get around it.

The last thing they tried? Compromise. Go halfway. Compromise works sometimes. When you have a husband or wife, it will not work out. Cannot work it out. If you give some give and take, make a compromise in the middle, it will work out sometimes. Governments compromise all the time. They trade this for that. But I will tell you one place where compromise will never work, ladies and gentlemen, it will never work when it comes to Jesus because it is either His way or there is no way. That is the world system. The world system looked at Him and they saw Him as a threat. They saw Him as a dissident. They saw Him as a threat to their system, and they had to get rid of Him because they did not want Him destroying everything that they had built and everything they had set up. Boy, they got a clue. He is coming, and He is going to destroy it.

II. The Jews' View of Christ's Death

2.) The second aspect, the second viewpoint you need to see, and I think this is very important, is how the Jews viewed the death of God's Son. We have talked about Romans, we have talked about many, many things, and I have already told you in Romans 9 how that concept that when God started a nation of Israel, He made Christ the chief cornerstone. He wanted to build everything with Israel around Jesus, and then they stumbled at that, the Jews did. Then Christ became a rock of offense, and finally in Daniel 2, it is the smiting stone where God comes down and clobbers the nation of Israel.

When you start to study the first coming of Christ, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and all the way up to Acts 7, you are basically studying one thing. Just get this mindset down. You are studying God sending His Son, His Son, to the nation of Israel as their Messiah, and they are rejecting Him, and they are rejecting Him, and then killing Him. Let me just say this to you: the religious leaders knew exactly who He was. We get the idea today that they did it out of ignorance. We get the idea today that they did not know what was going on. No, no, no. The Bible gives you the insight into that.

Turn over to Matthew 21:33. I want to show you something here that is very important. No, no, no. They knew who He was. They did not want Christ to bring the kingdom in. You know why? Because they wanted to bring the kingdom in. Because they knew if Christ would have brought the kingdom in, they all would have lost their jobs, and they had good, cushy political slash religious jobs. They had great power with Rome, and they did not want to lose that. The threat of Jesus Christ coming in and taking the Sadducees and the Pharisees and the scribes and throwing them in the ash heap and establishing His kingdom, that was more than they could stand. You find that same bunch today. Let me tell you something: any church denomination, any church

system that teaches on amillennialism or postmillennialism is the same bunch. They do not want Christ to come back and set up the kingdom. They want to make it good and fine, and then when they get it all ready, then Christ will come back so they can tell Him what to do. Let me tell you something: He came the first time that way, and they killed Him. He is not coming the second time that way. He is going to do a little killing Himself next time. You do well to learn that.

All right, look over here at Matthew 21:33. This is a great story. If you do not have this broken down in your Bible, I suggest you get it. Great insight into what we are dealing with the Jews here on number two.

Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country: And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him. When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.

I do not know if you have picked up yet what we have, but what you have in this great story here is a picture of the history of the nation of Israel from the Old Testament at the beginning of the nation of Israel right up to the second coming of Christ. Let me give you some keys here. Maybe it will become a little clearer. First of all, it says there was a certain householder. That will be God the Father. Notice the Bible says He planted a vineyard. That will be Jerusalem. Then it says that He hedged it roundabout and digged it with a winepress. That will be, He took care of it. That will bring you up to from Genesis all the way up to maybe 1 Samuel. Then the Bible says that He let it out to husbandmen. That will be the kings of Israel. Then He goes into a far country. That is why you do not find God the Father doing any great miracles after He establishes the kingdom with David. You will notice down there it talks about He built a tower. That tower will be the tower David talked about in the book of Psalms. It is all right there for you.

Verse 33 says He let it out to husbandmen. Those will be the kings of Israel. Then it says down there in verse 34, "and when the time of the fruit drew near." That is very important because God established the nation of Israel that He wanted to establish His kingdom, and He wanted that nation to bear fruit. It did not bear fruit. So what did He do? The Bible says He sends His servants and says, "Where is the fruit?" You know who those servants are? Those servants are the Old Testament prophets we have been studying. That will be Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Habakkuk. That will be Jonah. That will be Micaiah. That will be all the Old Testament prophets that He sent to the leaders of Israel. They all preached the same thing: "You have not borne any fruit." The husbandmen, the leaders of Israel, took His servants, the Old Testament prophets, beat one. That will be Micaiah, 1 Kings 22:14, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, He sent

other servants more than the first. There are your minor prophets. And they did unto them likewise. So you see, up to verse 36, you have pretty much a running concurrent story historically of God's establishment of the nation of Israel under the kings of Israel, and it brings us right up and how they rejected Him.

Now look at verse 37. "But last of all, here it comes. But last of all, he sent unto them his son." There is the first coming of Christ. There is Jesus after the 400 silent years coming to the nation of Israel as their Messiah. Look what God said. "But last of all, he sent unto them his son saying, They will reverence my son." Now you think they did it by accident? You think they did not know what was going on? You did not think they did not figure it out? Let me show you something here. "But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him and let us seize on his inheritance." They knew who He was. They knew exactly who He was. It is important for you to understand how the Jew looks at the crucifixion of Christ. Where the world saw Him as a threat, the Jewish leader did not want Him taking over their positions.

Verse 39, "And they caught him and cast him out of the vineyard and slew him." There is the crucifixion. I want you to note there that this idea that the Church of the Holy Sepulchre inside Jerusalem is where Jesus was crucified and where He was buried is nothing but junk. I saw on the news this morning, they were packed trying to get into the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the place where tradition holds, where Jesus was crucified and where He was buried. All these stupid Christians are out there wanting to be at the place. You know what? The real place, there probably was not anybody there. Do not you read that verse? That verse tells you they cast Him out of the city. He was not crucified in the city. He was crucified at Gordon's Calvary out there outside the city, exactly like the Bible says it was. I do not have time this morning to tell you how General Gordon, who was a British officer in the Allenby in 1917, found out and proved out to be the place. But I will tell you this, he believed the book I hold in my hand this morning.

Then verse 40 is the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. From that point on, from the crucifixion, the Jews paid the price for it. The two most horrific statements in the Bible that any person or any nation could ever make were said to God at the death of His Son. The first one is in Matthew 27:25, when the Jew looked up there and saw, when Pilate wanted to get rid of Him, wanted to give them out, did not want to kill Him, wanted to let Him go, and the Jews looked up and he said, "His blood be upon us and our people."

Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.

The second one over there is in John 19:15, when Pilate said, "Shall I crucify your king?" And they said, "We have no king but Caesar."

But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar.

There is a little side sermon here that I am not going to get into heavily, but I will just tell you this: you better be careful about the statements you make before God and to God when you are in one of those bullish moments when you think you are going to show everybody what you are

going to do, because God will write those things down, and you will have to deal with them later. They are down there before Pilate, and they have God's Son up there, and they are talking to that big pious gasbag mode now, like we have some kind of authority. "His blood be upon us and our people." My God, that sounds powerful. You know what God said? "Write it down." He got over there and he said, "Shall I crucify your king?" "Let us make some points with Rome. We have no king but Caesar." God said, "Write that down." For the next 2,000 years, they paid the price and bore the reproach of those two statements.

All through the Dark Ages, they were kicked out of just about every country that they could. When Titus came down in 70 AD, he destroyed the whole place. There are 26 Roman emperors, basically from that point on, and every one of them just persecuted them. When they got out of Europe in the Dark Ages, they were banished from Czechoslovakia. They were banished from England. They were banished from France. They were banished from Germany. They were banished everywhere. Finally, they settled in Europe, and they get down there, and Adolf Hitler showed up with a final solution, and he burned six million of them. Now today, today, they are surrounded, they are surrounded by seven nations and a bunch of people who just want to live for one thing, that is to wipe them off this planet. It all goes back to what they could have had, but they did not because they made a foolish statement. You better be careful what you say in your foolishness to God. You may be joking. He takes it real serious. That is Israel.

III. The Devil's View of Christ's Death

3.) Now there is a third viewpoint, and you need to get this, and this is how the devil saw the crucifixion. Most people do not have a clue what I am about to tell them, but I want you to know something: when Christ died on the cross, the battle of all battles was fought that day, 2,000 years ago. We look at Christ being crucified on when He was, on Wednesday, not Friday. He was crucified on "Bad Wednesday," not "Good Friday." He was crucified on Wednesday, and for three days He is down in that tomb. We are celebrating today because that is the day He came out, the first day of the week. Most people think about that and get caught up in all that, but they are so shallow in the Bible and know nothing about God. They know nothing about their salvation. They know nothing about the events that took place. It is all tradition to them. They have no idea that the battle of all battles was fought that day. All mankind's destiny and the future of the world and your soul and my soul hung in the balance.

The devil knew and understood something. Turn your Bibles over to Hebrews chapter 2. We are going to go there in a moment, but in Hebrews chapter 2, you find a great, you find why this event is so key. Because in that passage, we are going to see it here, that in the Old Testament, that was the devil that had power over death. The devil literally had the keys of death and hell. In other words, he had not been defeated yet. He reigned through the Old Testament up to the crucifixion as the supreme ruler over the dead. When somebody died, they were dead. He had them. He had them. They were dead, and they could not come back because he had them. He represents death. He was the one who held people in death, and he had the keys of death and hell.

But now the problem is this: once Christ died on the cross, the devil thought he had the victory. We have to go back just a little bit, all the way back to Genesis. Do not turn it in your Bible, but

all the way back in your mind, Genesis 1:1-2, and then tag into that Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28. There in those great passages, we find where the real problem started, do not we? We found back there that the devil was a cherub. He covered the throne of God. He was one of God's cherubs that ministered to the Lord. Then he decided one day that he was not satisfied with that. He kicked off the number one problem you and I have and all mankind is going to have. The Bible says in his heart was lifted up in pride. He said, "I will be like the most high God." He tried to overthrow God. This is where we will talk about it a little bit later on here. This is where the whole thing goes into a mess. From that point on, it is the devil versus God. That is all part of God's plan. We will clear that up here in a minute. I am just telling you the other story part of this here, all down through the Bible then and down through history. It has been God versus the devil.

You have heard me tell you many, many times, you want to know what history is? History is real simple. History is God moving in a direction to accomplish His plan, the devil moving in to counter that plan. That is all it is. That is all the Bible is. God made everything, put Adam and Eve down in the garden, started all over again. The devil stepped in and messed it up. He got Adam and Eve going after that, fixed that problem. He got going. By the time Noah comes around, the world is in a mess. He comes down and wipes them out again. Now that is all part of God's plan. We will talk about that in a moment. My point is, that is what history is. That is all history is because the devil wants to be God. That is his number one gripe. He wants to be God.

You saw it in the Gospels in Matthew chapter 4. Remember when the devil came to Jesus? Jesus was born now. He is now 33 years of age, and the devil takes Him up on a high mountain and he tries to get Him to do three things. You know the last thing he tries to get Him to do? The last thing he tries to get Him to do is very significant. The devil now says to Jesus Christ, "If you will bow down and worship me, I will give you all the kingdoms of this world." If you remember, he took Him on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms out there. He said, "If you will bow down and worship me, I will give you all these kingdoms." That is pretty incredible, seeing the fact that when we know the Bible, we know that at the end in Revelation 19, it is God who gives Christ all of those kingdoms. You see what the devil is saying? "If you recognize me as God, I will let you be over it all, but I just want you to look at me as God." You know the great verse that you all had to quote and have in your Bible that Jesus said, "Up your nose with a rubber hose." I am not going to do that.

But that was not enough either, was it? Because then in the agony of the garden, the great temptation comes from him to fear the cross. That is nothing more than the devil trying to get Him to quit. The Bible says He prayed to His Father, and His sweat was like great drops of blood. He prayed for this cup. That cup is the wrath of God being poured out on Him that He knew was going to come. But He prayed through. Then there was the crucifixion itself. We are going to talk about this in a little bit when it comes down to the last one, but literally the devil brought hell to the cross while Jesus was on it. Finally, he had Him killed. I am telling you, we look into that spiritual world back then, and we would have seen a great party being thrown because now God's Son was dead. The devil had the great trump card. He had the great blue chip. He had God's Son held hostage in death because he had the power of death. No man in the Old Testament ever came out of that grave. He had Him now. He had Him now. He had won.

I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting. For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? let us stand together: who is mine adversary? let him come near to me.

What a tremendous passage it is. Oh, the great unseen battle that takes place that day. He says in verse 6, "I gave my back to the smiters and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair. I hid my face from the shame and the spitting for the Lord God will help me therefore I will not be confounded therefore have I set my face like a flint and I know that I shall not be ashamed." You know what He is saying? That is Christ. That actually is recorded in the Old Testament in Isaiah of what Christ did on the cross. It says that they beat Him. They pulled out His hair. They slapped Him. But He had, He knew what was coming. The Bible says that instead of folding up, instead of feeling the pain, He went to God with it. There is great insight into this. Finally, He comes back and He says, "I will not be confounded therefore have I set my face like a flint," because He realized that the battle of the scribes and the Pharisees and the Roman soldiers that was going on around Him was not the real battle.

Look at verse 8. Jesus speaking to His Father. "He is near God that justifies me. Who will contend with me?" Talking about the devil. "Let us stand together. Whom is mine adversary? Let him come unto me." On the cross of Calvary, the adversary came. That devil threw everything he had at Him. That devil tried everything he could to give Him the most agonizing, brutalizing death that could ever happen. He played on every emotion and every fear of the human side of Jesus, even though He was the divine Son of God. We know about the two different natures. He put everything on that thing and gave Him everything. His great co-host Rome had killed God's Son. Roman power had given Him His death sentence. Roman style of crucifixion was a capital punishment. Roman nails were in His hands and His feet, and now a Roman soldier had put a spear into His side.

That is why the Bible says in 1 Corinthians chapter 15, when Paul talks to the church of Corinth and they are all messed up on the resurrection, he simply says this: "Look, folks, without Christ coming out of that tomb, everything we believe today means nothing. If He did not rise from the dead, if He did not come out of that tomb, if He did not rise from the dead the third day and come out of there, then everything I preach is in vain. Your salvation is in vain. We are lost without hope. There is nothing we can do, and we are all destined and doomed to hell." But thank God He did come out of that tomb. Thank God the devil could not hold Him down there. Thank God on that third day, when He kicked that rock back and He came out, He had the keys of death and hell, and the devil does not ever have them again. That is why you and I never have to fear death, the devil, or anybody again, because greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world. Amen. We talk about the victorious Christian life. That is the victorious Christian life.

Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.

Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

There is the verse. There is why you and I get to go to heaven. There is why when He stepped out of that tomb, the devil thought he had a victory. He had Him in death the first day, the second day, but the third day, up from the grave He arose, and He has the keys of death and hell, and we never have to fear death again. That is how the devil saw it, and the devil now knows he is defeated. I know it does not seem like he is defeated, but I have news for you: on that day, he knew he was finished. That is why preachers tell you, that is why your mom and dad would tell you, that is why everybody will tell you in life, you may lose a few battles, but bless God, on that day, we won the victory.

IV. God's View of Christ's Death

4.) Then the fourth viewpoint, and that will be how God viewed the death of His Son. The plan of God, why God did what He has done through history, is revealed in the Bible. I know people look at the Bible and they think, "Well, the Bible is a very hard book." No, it is really not. You get in the right frame of mind, in the right place, with the right thing that you need, the Bible is a very easy book. Understanding the plan of God may think it is complicated, but it is really not. Somebody said one time, and it is a true statement, "This old world is as close as a Christian will ever get to going to hell, and by the same token, this old world is as close as an unsaved man will ever get to going to heaven." Boy, that is a true statement.

All the Bible is a picture of God's plan. Very briefly, God has a plan, and it has really not much to do with planet Earth or the six or seven thousand years of history that we know of. God's plan is for eternity. I hope you do not think that God is going to let this little rat race go on down here forever. There is a purpose to this, and this is certainly not God's main plan. It is part of the plan, but it is not the final plan. The final plan is for God to be in an eternal state with beings that were redeemed by His blood, who want by choice to be with Him through all of eternity. Then God is going to wipe away all the tears. There will be no more cancer, there will be no more tuberculosis, there will be no more problems, there will be no more death, there will be no more heartache, there will be no more wars, there will be no more inflation, there will be no more problems forever. We will be in a place where God designed for us to be.

But God wants you to choose that. God does not want to make you or me to love Him. It is just like your significant boyfriend or girlfriend or your wife or your husband, you want them to choose to love you. If you had to give your wife a dose of medicine every morning to keep her loving you, I mean, that may work for a while, but after a while, you just want her to love you because she chose to love you. Everybody can understand that. God does not want to have to give you a pill every day to make you love Him. He wants you to look at the alternatives of life. That is why He allowed the devil to come into this world. He allowed the devil to come in to give us an alternative. Then God, through His Holy Spirit, has done everything in the world to show us. He put preachers, guys like me. He put churches like this all down through history that

would tell you the alternative. Then He let some things happen because the devil wants to destroy you, so sometimes the devil made your life so bad that you just wanted out of it. Finally, when that breath of fresh air, that light, that drink of cold water, like the woman at the well in John 4, you came out of the darkness and into the light because you were tired of the way it was. There has to be an alternative. God gave us that alternative, and all the history of man for these six, seven thousand years has been that choosing process.

God Himself, our Creator, who loved us and wants us to be with Him forever, He came down and He Himself, as the Bible says, took on the body of a man. He paid the price for each and every one of us that if we would choose Him by our own free will, that we could spend an eternity with Him. Oh, the love that drew salvation's plan. Oh, the grace that brought it down to man. Oh, the mighty gulf that God did span. That power when He came down and He paid that price. Yes, God allowed sin to come into this world, but then God came down and paid my price and took sin out of the world.

Paul Harvey was a great Christian, and I loved to listen to him. One time years ago, I heard him tell a story at Christmas, and it was a story about a family, and the father was a devout atheist. The mom was a Christian, and the kids were Christian. It was Christmas morning, very cold outside, very bitter, very bad snow. They wanted him to go to church with them, and he said, "No, I do not want any part of it." So she packed up the kids and went on to church. He is sitting there by the kitchen table, and obviously God's Holy Spirit is working on him because his family went to church, and he is fighting it off, you know. He is saying, "I do not believe in God, and how can all that hocus pocus stuff be? It just does not make any sense to me. I am an educated man. Why would a man, a being like God, ever come down to be a man? It just does not make any sense."

He is sitting there, and suddenly after about 20 minutes, he looks out the back window, and right there on the ground, he sees a little sparrow. This sparrow has got a bad wing or a broken wing. It cannot fly, and it is shivering out there, and it is very cold out, very wet. He has a moment of compassion for that little bird, and he tries to think of ways how he could bring that bird in and get him warm and make him feel better and then let him loose. He opens the window, hoping the bird will fly in, but the bird will not fly in. He gets even to the point where he takes some old stale bread and he throws the bread out, hoping the little bird will come to the bread and then finally come up to the window sill and come in. Another little bird will not touch the bread. All the little birds, he is just a gigantic hand coping up this big window with this big hole, and for him, it could be the bottom of a pit. He is not going in there. He sits there, and he is so frustrated, and he is absolutely, he got caught up in it, and he just, he is so caught up with the fact that this little bird is going to freeze to death, and he knows if he goes out the door, the bird is going to just do whatever he does and maybe really hurt itself, and he does not want to do that, but he cannot coax that bird to come into the warmth and the safety of his home.

As he sat there, he thought and he thought to himself, "You know what? What do I do?" He said, "This sounds stupid, but the only way I could ever get this bird to understand that I do not want to hurt it, that I want to help it, is if I could just become a bird myself." Right at that moment, the church bells rang, and God spoke to him in his heart, "Yes, that is right. The only way I, as God,

could ever get you to understand that I love you and I want to help you is to become one of you." That atheist fell down on his knees at that table, asked Jesus to come into his heart, and got saved, became a great father and a great Christian at that point in time. That is what God did. God saw you and me. He saw you and me in all of our agony, and we, the natural mind, received not the things of God. We could not understand God. God is a Spirit, and God Himself, God was manifested in the flesh. He came down, and God views the crucifixion as Him paying the price for you and me by our own free will to come and spend an eternity with Him.

I have one more I want to preach to you, but I want to pause right here for just a second and say this to you: if you are here this morning and you are not sure where you stand with God, I want you to know before I preach the last one to you that He came down and He died for you. Just like that man could not get that little bird to understand what he wanted him to do, and the only way for him to do that was to become a bird, God has something He wants for you, but the only way He could get us to understand it was for God to become man.

V. Our View of Christ's Death

5.) Then there is the last one. We have looked at how the world viewed the crucifixion. We looked at how Israel views it. We have seen all important how the devil saw it. Now we have understood how God saw it. Now it is time in this fifth one, this fifth viewpoint, to look and see how you and I should view it. A man said to me one time a long time ago, I preached this message at a church, and he said to me afterward, "What a tragedy it is that the world and the Jews look at the death of God's Son the way they do." I put my arm around him and looked at him and I said, "You know what? Forget all about that. The real tragedy is how God's people look at it."

Today is Easter. All across the metro, across the world, churches are packed. New clothes, flowers on the pulpit. We have big dinners, all the pomp and circumstance. I am sure there was time that braved the cold that was out there before the sun came up this morning, or maybe in the churches, I am sure there are pageants and plays being put on right now. Yet next week, everybody will be back to business as usual, will not we? We will go back to what we were doing until Christmas comes around, and then we will drag out our spirituality again and drag our carcass back.

I know what is wrong with God's people today. I really do. The simple fact is that they do not understand, maybe in some cases they do not care about the price that was paid for their salvation. I can think of nothing more despicable in my own life than to take the salvation that God gave me and then do absolutely nothing with it. God should have had an attitude about me that never let me get saved. Stay with me now. Before Bob Alexander got saved, God had plenty of reason to have an attitude against me. That attitude was very justifiable, that He should have never let me get saved. I think you would be honest this morning, you could say the same thing. Then why is it that after He forsakes that attitude and goes ahead and saves me, He gives me all that He has, then I develop an attitude toward Him? What is wrong with that?

I will tell you what is wrong with it. I will tell you why every child of God gets out of fellowship on this planet. I will tell you in a heartbeat: the fundamental problem lies in the fact that they either never knew, they lost sight of, or they have never figured it out, the real price that God paid for them, for their salvation. They never understand the price that was paid on Calvary's cross. All they ever get of the crucifixion is Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. All they get is the surface picture of that thing. It just does not. I remember when *The Passion of the Christ* came out, and it was, it rocked the audiences because it took you beyond Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John. As goofy as it was, the portrayal point of Him being crucified was very real. I watched people and saw people on the news, and when I went to see it myself, people were horrified. People came out weeping, crying, and moved by that thing. I thought to myself at that point, "Is not that a tragedy? It took a movie, a film made by unsaved people, to get God's people to weep when that Bible has been filled back in the Old Testament with the very thoughts, with the very feelings, with everything He felt on that cross, every fear, every emotion, the abandonment of God His Father, the shame that He bore on the cross, the agony, the suffering, all for you and for me."

Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

It is just one of those passages, and God's people today care nothing for the price that was paid that day. Oh, we see worse at the movie theaters. We see worse on television. We are so desensitized to all of the things that go on in the world that we just cannot transfer it over to the day that Christ paid the price. We are so shot and soaked through with Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and the silly little messages and the little things that do not really illustrate and sermons that do not paint the picture of the agony of the cross that Jesus Christ suffered when He paid that price for you and for me.

Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?

You see, the arm of the Lord is a great term in the Old Testament. That is a reference to Jesus Christ. He was God's right arm. That is why He sits on the right hand of God the Father. The arm of the Lord in the Bible, in the Old Testament, will always be Jesus Christ. Of course, we take that terminology and put it into our world today, and we talk about the fact that I have heard guys say it many, many years over the years that, "You know what? He is my right-hand man." Well, that was Jesus Christ to God. He was His right-hand man. I heard a guy say one time, "I love that guy so much, he did so much for me, I would cut my right arm off for him." That is exactly what

God the Father did for you and for me. He cut off His right arm, cut off in the sense that God abandoned Him on the cross, the right arm of Jesus Christ.

For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

The dry ground will be the dryness of the nation of Israel and their unfruit-bearing. "He hath no form or comeliness that when we see him that we beauty that we should desire him." This is a lot different now than the Song of Solomon. You see, this is the day that God turned that lovely, altogether lovely Lord Jesus Christ, the apple of God's eye, everything that God wanted and could have. He was approved of. He was in this Son. He was never disobedient to the Father. He was everything the Father wanted. He was everything the Father could hope for. Now on that day, God the Father turned His back on His Son for you and for me. There is no beauty here that we should desire Him.

He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

He was smitten by God. The example back in the Old Testament is when Moses and the people of God had no water in the wilderness journey. God told Moses to come out and go to this big old rock. Then God told Moses to take that staff, the rod in his hand, the rod that represented God's judgment, the rod that he turned the waters of blood with, the rod that he brought the plagues in with, and then he stands upon that rock and he takes that rod and he smites that rock, and the water comes out, and the people get the nourishment that they need. Well, that rock in the Old Testament, my friend, is a picture of the day Jesus Christ was crucified. God stood upon His own Son. God took His rod of judgment and smote and afflicted His Son, and because He did, the water of the Word of God came out, and you and I are saved today.

Yet you can go to a Royals game or a hockey game. You can watch something on TV. You can watch American Idol when your best champion sings up there and gets voted off, or you can weep when they get voted off or they become the American Idol, and everybody is happy, but there is absolutely no emotion about my Jesus dying on Calvary's cross and paying the price for you and I to go to heaven. Oh, do not tell me what the problem is. Do not tell me why you will not be in church next week. Do not tell me why there will be empty pews across this world.

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

I cannot read verse 7 without thinking back to the great story in Genesis chapter 22, how you have the picture of Abraham and his son Isaac, and it is a perfect matchup. Abraham, a type of God the Father, Isaac, a type of Christ. Just as God wanted His Son that was everything to Him, Abraham waited and wanted a son that was the promise and the blessings of God, and finally Isaac came. Then after he gets Isaac, what does God tell him to do? He tells him to take that boy and go to the land of Moriah, and at a place there, He wants that boy offered for a sacrifice. I do not know if you know it or not, but the land of Moriah is right where Jesus Christ was crucified on Mount Moriah. That is Gordon's Calvary. Some 1,800 years before the events ever played out, that old man Abraham took that boy and took him up there to Mount Moriah, did exactly what God said, built that altar, put that boy on that altar, tied his hands, and then took the knife of God. He was going to plunge it into his heart because God said, "You give me your son." But right before that knife pierced his breast, God's hand came down and stopped it, and He said, "Abraham!" And God stayed his hand, and that boy went free.

Then he makes one of the greatest statements anywhere in the Bible, an incredible statement. He says, "Abraham, God Himself will provide a lamb." Then if you study the passage, Abraham looks, and over in the thicket, there is a ram caught in that, and Abraham goes over and gets that ram and then sacrifices that ram instead of Isaac. Most people read that passage and never see the problem. God said He will provide a lamb. That was a ram. That is not the sacrifice He was talking about. No, that is a prophecy on Christ's death on the cross. That is a prophecy of how you and I need to look at it. You and I should have borne our own sacrifice, that we should have paid eternally in hell for our sin debt, but the Bible says, "the chastisement of our peace was upon him." On that day, God said, "God Himself will provide a lamb," and at Calvary's cross, God came through with what He promised, and He provided the Lamb, the Lamb of God, to take away the sin of the world.

Turn with me over to Job chapter 30. I want to leave you with one of the most powerful stories in the Bible, and yet one of the things that I will never understand, never figure out, not till I get home to heaven, but it is one of the most amazing things, but I think it is one of the things that is the reason God's people take the indifferent attitude they do. We have looked at the world's viewpoint, Israel's viewpoint, the devil's viewpoint, God's viewpoint. Now, how it is our viewpoint.

They are children of fools, yea, children of base men: they are viler than the earth. And now am I their song, yea, I am their byword. They abhor me, they flee far from me, and spare not to spit in my face. Because he hath loosed my cord, and afflicted me, they have also let loose the bridle before me. Upon my right hand rise the youth; they push away my feet, and they raise up against me the ways of their destruction. They mar my path, they set forward my calamity, they have no helper. They came upon me as a wide breaking in of waters: in the desolation they rolled themselves upon me. Terrors are turned upon me: they pursue my soul as the wind: and my welfare passeth away as a cloud. And now my soul is poured out upon me; the days of affliction have taken hold upon me. My bones are pierced in me in the night season: and my sinews take no rest. By the great force of my disease is my garment changed: it bindeth me about as the collar of my coat. He hath cast me into the mire, and I am become like dust and ashes. I cry unto

thee, and thou dost not hear me: I stand up, and thou regardest me not. Thou art become cruel to me: with thy strong hand thou opposest thyself against me. Thou liftest me up to the wind; thou causest me to ride upon it, and dissolvest my substance. For I know that thou wilt bring me to death, and to the house appointed for all living. Howbeit he will not stretch out his hand to the grave, though they cry in his destruction. Did not I weep for him that was in trouble? was not my soul grieved for the poor? When I looked for good, then evil came unto me: and when I waited for light, there came darkness. My bowels boiled, and rested not: the days of affliction have prevented me. I went mourning without the sun: I stood up, and I cried in the congregation. I am a brother to dragons, and a companion to owls. My skin is black upon me, and my bones are burned with heat. My harp also is turned to mourning, and my organ into the voice of them that weep.

You understand what He is saying? He is talking about your worst nightmare, when you feel it absolutely is hopeless, and your emotions just run like water, and you are in a place that you are absolutely helpless, and you are terrified, and you are absolutely emotionally charged. This is exactly what He is saying. "My bones, verse 17, are pierced in the night season, and my sinews, that is the muscles, take no rest. By the great force of my disease is my garment changed, that is where they take away His garment. It bindeth me about as a collar of my coat. He, God, casteth me into the mire, and I became like dust and ashes. I cry unto Thee, Him crying to God, and Thou dost not hear me. I stand up, and Thou, God, regardest me not." That is the sixth and ninth hour where He cried out, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"

"Thou art become, Thou God, verse 20, Thou art become cruel to me: with Thy strong hand Thou opposest Thyself against me. Thou lifted me up to the wind, now they are lifting the cross up, going to drop it in the hole. Thou causest me to ride upon it, Thou dissolvest my substance. For I know that Thou wilt bring me to death, and to the house appointed for all living. Howbeit he will not stretch out his hand to the grave, though they cry in his destruction. Did not I weep for him that was in trouble? Was I not my soul grieved for the poor? When I looked for good, then evil came unto me: and when I waited for life, there came darkness."

Look at verse 27, 28, 29, 30, and 31. I want to talk to you, my friend, that from the sixth and the ninth hour, He is crucified on Wednesday. He goes on the cross about nine o'clock in the morning, but from the sixth and the ninth hour, from three o'clock in the afternoon our time to six in the evening, this is where the sun refuses to shine. This is literally where the devil brings hell to Him on the cross. This is where the Son of God cries out what an unsaved man cries out in hell today. This is where He cries out, "I thirst," because the rich man in hell in Luke chapter 16 said, "I thirst." This is where He cries out, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" because He has already seen God had forsaken Him. God turned His back on Him. God afflicted Him. God did everything from Him and took everything from Him. He cried unto God, and God did not hear Him. He stood up, and God regarded Him not. Thou, God, had become cruel to Him, and with a strong hand opposed His own Son. This is where the sun refuses to shine. This is where God turned His back on His Son.

Let me tell you something: back in the Old Testament, in one night, one angel killed 186,000. I look at this and I think of how God loved Him, and I think of how God loved me. But God loved

His Son more than He loved me. God had no right to love me. He had no reason to love me. There was no purpose found in me. His Son had everything that God wanted. He was everything that God purposed. When He is hanging on that cross, and God had sent His Son down to the East of Israel to bring peace and to bring man to salvation, and they took Him and they put Him on a tree and they crucified Him, and they laughed at Him, they made fun of Him, they pulled out His beard, they whipped Him on the back, and finally they nailed His hands to a cross, to His feet to a tree. About that time, God has taken so much, and that old Roman soldier, like all soldiers, walks up, and he looked at his buddies and says, "Watch this," and he throws that spear up into His side, and God's Son winces with the pain, and He cries out to God. I believe with all of my heart, God raised His hand to send a legion of angels to wipe out this godless planet, to send us all to hell, but Jesus cried out, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." "Father, do not do that. Bob Alexander needs my salvation." God let His Son pay the price for me, and He paid it for you.

One of the first times I got to go with my father and Lord Mel Sabaka, we went down to a little river town on the Ohio River called Steubenville. This must have been about 1973, a long time ago. Mel preached that night. I led the singing, played my trumpet. Mel got up to preach, and he preached on the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ. He came down to the end of that sermon, and I had never heard this before, had a great revival that night. Mel told the story, and everybody in that room could understand and could see the illustration point. He talked about how that in 1956, the Ohio River, there is a great river that cuts between West Virginia and Ohio, and there was a drawbridge, there was a train bridge that went across that river. When the ships came down, they would have to blow their horns twice, and if the railway was clear, the guy would pull the levers, and the bridge would go this way, and the ships could go in. Then he would pull back the levers, and it would go back this way, and the trains would come across. It was a job that was a very important job, the safety of not only the shipping traffic coming through with the barges, but also the trains that passed over there.

He had a little boy. That boy was about six or seven years old, just about the age of many of your kids. That little kid, like all little kids, wanted to go to work with Daddy. This was long before they had "Take Your Kid to Work Day." I think they only had that one time up here, then they decided not to do that anymore. But he took this, he, this little kid used to bug him and bug him and bug him to go to work with Daddy. So one day, Daddy took him to work. The big tower control thing was high up here on the side of the bluff, you know, where he could see the train and the boats coming down, and he was having fun, and trains were coming by and things like that. The little boy was having the time of his life, and he was down there throwing, skipping rocks off the water like that. The phone rang, and the guy picked up the phone, and the guy said, "We had a mistake. There is a train track, a coming train coming down the track. Make sure that that bridge is open." Well, he just opened the bridge, and some ships were going by, and he started to pull down back on those levers to turn that bridge around. About that time, he heard a cry. He looked down, his little boy had fallen off the dock and fallen into the river. He got down there, and the river was very swift, and he let the, he let the things off the control, and he went down to get his kid. About that time, he heard the train whistle coming down the track. The train was right around that corner, and the bridge was out this way. He started to go back and pull

those levers back, and then his little boy, he saw him down there throwing in the water, crying out for his dad. He dropped the bridge and went back down, and he went down to get that boy, and that train was coming right down the line, and he looked at this boy and he looked at that train, and finally he went back up, and with tears down his eyes, he pulled both those levers back and held that bridge, and that bridge went across, and that train went across, and about 200 passengers never knew what happened. But they found the little boy's body about two days later down the river.

Tragic story. Mel told that story, and everybody in that place knew exactly what he was talking about. Then he brought it home. He said, "There was a day when God's Son was on that cross, and He cried out to His Father, 'My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? Why have You turned Your back on me? Why have You afflicted me? Help me, get me off this cross!'" And God was ready to do it, but then God saw you and He saw me, and He saw millions and millions of people that have been lost without Christ, without hope, if He had got His Son off that cross. So God, with tears running down His face, with a broken heart, with the agony of the death of His Son, held down those levers while they pounded and beat and crucified His Son so you and I, some 2,000 years later, could get across that great span called the Lake of Fire.

Do not tell me about it. You now know the world's viewpoint. You now know Israel's viewpoint. You now know the devil's viewpoint. You now know God's viewpoint. You now know what you and I's viewpoint should be. He died for you. He died for you and He died for me on that cross. He paid the price that you and I might have the hope of eternal life. He turned His back on His Son, and His Son, that verse says, "His bowels boiled, His bones were burnt black with heat on that cross from the sixth and the ninth hour in that agony." Listen to me: Jesus Christ paid in three hours what every man and woman whoever lived on planet Earth would have paid in all of eternity, dumped on His Son in a three-hour span. Then we walk out of here and do our own thing, that we take the name of Jesus Christ and get shaded, and we live our lives any way we want to. I will tell you what the problem is, my dear friend, I love you to death, but I am going to tell you what your problem is: you do not understand the price that was paid on Calvary's cross for you to sit here today. Every head bowed and every eye closed. Let me just ask you today...