

**I. GOOD FRIDAY – WE REMEMBER THE CROSS OF JESUS CHRIST.**

*<sup>13</sup> Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”), <sup>14</sup> that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. Gal. 2:13-14*

A. Jesus went to the cross in two primary ways.

1. He lived what we will call a “crucified life.” He did not live for himself, but for the will of His Father fully trusting the love of His Father and the power of Holy Spirit to live on the earth in his generation. You and I may also call it, ‘the way of the cross.’

*<sup>24</sup> Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. <sup>25</sup> For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. Matt. 16:24-25*

2. The day of his crucifixion.

*<sup>29</sup> The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! John 1:29*

B. It is these two aspects of the Cross we remember today.

C. In many ways, the cross of Jesus Christ was and still is an opportunity for “exodus” for humankind.

D. The story of God’s deliverance of Israel from slavery in Egypt is a type and example of what God would do for all mankind through the cross of Jesus Christ. In effect, God through the power of deliverance was foreshadowing the Cross, and thereby, acting on behalf of his people Israel based on a future event.

E. God delivered his people from slavery and tyranny, but needed to show them the truth about the condition of their hearts.

F. He is showing all humanity that the issue of sin, brokenness, tyranny, murder, adultery, lying, cheating, etc. is ALL a condition of the human heart.

G. Father delivers his people with mighty power (see Exodus 15) and destroys the Egyptian army before their very eyes.

H. And yet, not a full three days later, when in the heat of the desert wilderness on their way to the mountain of God, they run out of water and begin to complain against Moses and God.

*<sup>22</sup> So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea; then they went out into the Wilderness of Shur. And they went three days in the wilderness and found no water. <sup>23</sup> Now when they came to Marah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter. Therefore the name of it was called Marah. <sup>24</sup> And the people complained against Moses, saying, “What shall we drink?” <sup>25</sup> So he cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a tree. When he cast it into the waters, the waters were made sweet.*

*Ex. 15: 22-25*

- I. It was here by the bitter waters of Marah, that God showed himself to be a healer not just a deliverer. Again God was foreshadowing the moment Jesus's death on the cross would heal the bitter waters of our complaining hearts.

*There He made a statute and an ordinance for them, and there He tested them, <sup>26</sup> and said, "If you diligently heed the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the LORD who heals you." <sup>27</sup> Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve wells of water and seventy palm trees; so they camped there by the waters. Ex. 15: 25-27*

- J. Isaiah prophesied that Messiah would also be called, "...the Branch of the Lord, who is beautiful and glorious." (Isa. 4:2).
- K. This truth gives us the picture that Jesus's death on the cross was like throwing the branch into our bitter waters.
- L. What is in those bitter waters?
1. Sinful acts – adulteries, addictions, divorces, sexual immorality, lies, cheating, power mongering, etc.
  2. Iniquities – generational patterns massaged into us by our "fathers" (whether literal or figurative).
  3. Sin nature – the perpetual bent towards creating our own pathway to God, called self-righteousness or self-justification.

## II. JESUS THE BRANCH IN THE STORY OF THE RICH (YOUNG) RULER

*<sup>17</sup> Now as He was going out on the road, one came running, knelt before Him, and asked Him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" <sup>18</sup> So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. <sup>19</sup> You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,' 'Do not defraud,' 'Honor your father and your mother.' " <sup>20</sup> And he answered and said to Him, "Teacher, all these things I have kept from my youth." <sup>21</sup> Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me." <sup>22</sup> But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. Mark 10: 17-22*

- A. This rich ruler comes seeking answers to what apparently is still a remaining emptiness in his heart. Obviously all his wealth and power has not filled his heart with peace and rest with God.
- B. Jesus' answer causes a self-justified response. The rich ruler is now unmasked and is offering his self-justified, self-righteous life as something that should be received by God.
- C. Jesus filled with love for this rich ruler gives him an answer that challenges his self-righteous, self-justifying ways. Jesus talks to him about his "lack" and it is difficult for the rich ruler to receive it.

- D. Like Cain, who wanted his own self-righteous works to count on God's altar, this rich ruler walks away discouraged.
- E. Jesus in essence says, "One thing you lack, and it's pretty vital. God wants a love relationship with you. Your trust in your wealth, power and wisdom do not count before God to justify the debt you owe God."
- F. Jesus looked at him and LOVED HIM. This rich ruler looked at Jesus and asked, "What more can I do or add so that God will accept me?" The rich ruler was offering things, non-living attachments.
1. Jesus offered a relationship of love.
  2. Jesus told him to sell his self-righteous, self-justified ways. To give his wealth to the poor.
    - a. In the Jewish culture, wealth and power were seen as rewards for righteousness. What Jesus was asking this rich ruler to do was abandon the identity that he had constructed for himself through his wealth and power.
    - b. In present culture, what patterns of behaviour or thinking are you self-justifying before God?
  3. Jesus called him to a life of sacrifice – 'pick up your cross'
  4. Jesus called him to follow the footsteps of Christ.
- G. If you were to ask Jesus this same question today, what would he ask you to surrender? Are there areas of self-righteousness and self-justification you are presenting as reason to leverage relationship with God?
- H. Jesus has broken the curse of sin by dying on the cross in our place. At the cross of Christ my self-righteousness is crucified and the life of Christ is imparted to me.