



MORRISON ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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April 6, 2012

Good Friday: Cross of Christ

Pastor Randy Ott

First Lesson: [Isaiah 52:13-53:12](#)

Sermon Text: [Isaiah 53:1-6](#)

The Wounds That Heal

"We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you. By your holy cross you have redeemed the world." That ancient prayer is what closes our service today as we focus on the Cross of Christ. It's a prayer that is good for us to make our own every day of our lives because the cross, especially a crucifix, the cross with the body of Christ on it, is not a comfortable thing to see. It's not something that we by nature really adore. It makes you uncomfortable. It makes you squeamish. It's not just because you see that there is a body on that cross that is suffering. It's because you know why he was on that cross and why he was suffering. This time you can't blame it on someone else. You can't blame it on a poor upbringing or a dysfunctional family. You can't blame it on people around you or the evils of society. What it comes right down to is that it's all about you. Your sins killed Jesus Christ. This is the one time it truly is all about you, and it doesn't make you comfortable to see that.

I don't know if you have seen the movie *The Passion of the Christ*, but the whole crucifixion scene is horrific to watch. If you are honest with yourself, somewhere along in there as you wince at the gruesomeness of his death, there has to be that light of recognition that goes on in your head that says, "This is my fault. This is what I did to my Savior. This is what I did to my God, the One who created me. This is what I did to the One who has given me every good and perfect gift that I enjoy while I live on this earth. I killed him."

In that tangible darkness of that first Good Friday, as we talked about during our midweek services, that's the wrath of God being poured out on Jesus. Every sin that was committed from Adam and Eve in the Garden to the last person that commits a sin before Christ returns, the punishment that every one of those sins deserve is compacted and compressed and then off-loaded onto Jesus. He endures it all. As we saw last night, he endures it, though he doesn't deserve it. He is the One that has perfect love. He is the One that loved God at all times, with all his heart and all his soul and all his mind. He is the One that loved his neighbor as himself and even more than himself. He doesn't deserve it. It's obvious that it's only you and me that deserve it.

"We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you. By your holy cross you have redeemed the world." That's a prayer to make our own to keep in front of our eyes because at one point in time, I firmly believe Satan is going to come to you and tell you it's not true. While you go about your day-to-day life, Satan tries to minimize sin, right? It's no big deal. Everyone does it. That's outdated thinking. Satan comes with all these lies about sins and tries to tell you they're not sins. But there is going to come a day when

he is going to completely reverse course, turn himself completely around, and he is going to try to convince you that you are the worst of all sinners. I think it's when you are lying on your death bed, when you know you're about to meet your Maker. Satan is going to come and want to set up a DVD player in your mind, put in that DVD and then one by one bring back to your mind the sins you have committed throughout your life that you have forgotten about. He is going to say, "See that? You're not a Christian. Look at this one. You firmly right here are saying you're on my side, not on God's side. Every time you did one of these things, you said that you are mine, not God's." He is going to want you to despair of God's love for you. He is going to try to lead you to believe that God cannot take you to heaven because of these many, many sins you have committed.

That's when we need to do what we just sang, that last verse we just sang. "Remind me of your passion when my last hour draws nigh. My eyes shall then behold you, upon your cross will dwell, my heart will then enfold you. Who dies in faith dies well." That's when we want to focus on that blessed cross because that's where our sins were paid for. That's where the wrath of God was poured out. When we stand before God, we can say that in Christ we are forgiven. We are saints of God. And we are holy. That's why this awful day on which God himself dies is called "Good", because it's good for us. Our sins have been paid for. We have been bought back. We are God's. We are not Satan's.

Don't let him deceive you with the lie, because the truth is that God loves you and he always will. That love will never be removed from you, so devote yourself to that love. Make it a constant part of your life. Then when the accuser brings his accusations against you, you can say what the confessor said in our confessions. "Lord Jesus, you are my righteousness, just as I am your sin. You have taken upon yourself what is mine and given me what is yours. You have taken upon yourself what you were not and have given to me what I was not." Those are the words of Luther, and if you can't say them with those exact words, just still believe that truth with all your heart...that Jesus has taken away your sin. Satan's lies have been overcome.

Look on the cross, boldly, confidently, and continually, and then say with all your heart, "We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you. By your holy cross you have redeemed the world."