

Teaching: WHERE WRATH AND MERCY MEETS

Good Morning CVCHURCH. Happy Palm Sunday as we prepare ourselves for Good Friday and our fantastic Easter Celebrations. We will have three marvelous services at 8:00A.M. 9:30A.M. and 11:30A.M. Please be praying who you can invite and pick up some of our beautifully designed invitations **THIS IS LOVE to hand out to your family members, neighbors, friend, and people you come across in your day-to-day lifestyle.**

Let's pray together as we center ourselves on Jesus Christ and what He did through His loving Work on the cross so that we could be saved, forgiven, redeemed, reconciled to Father God, filled with His Holy Spirit, and empowered to **obey The Great Commandment, The Great Commission, and the Great Foundation.** Before we pray, I want to read one of the most powerful passages in the entire Bible why Jesus died on the cross and what the blessings and the results that He achieved by His obedience to the Father's Will. I have provided this passage for you on your notes. Please follow along as I read it and then we will pray. Isaiah 53:3-12 **“He was despised and rejected— a man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief. We turned our backs on him and looked the other way. He was despised, and we did not care. 4 Yet it was our weaknesses (our griefs he carried; it was our sorrows that weighed him down. And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for his own sins! 5 But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed. 6 All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God's paths to follow our own. Yet the Lord laid on him the sins of us all. 7 He was oppressed and treated harshly, yet he never said a word. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter. And as a sheep is silent before the shearers, he did not open his mouth. 8 Unjustly condemned, he was led away. No one cared that he died without descendants, that his life was cut short in midstream. But he was struck down for the rebellion of my people. 9 He had done no wrong and had never deceived anyone. But he was buried like a criminal; he was put in a rich man's grave. 10 But it was the Lord's good plan to crush him and cause him grief. Yet when his life is made an offering for sin, he will have many descendants. He will enjoy a long life, and the Lord's good plan will prosper in his hands. 11 When he sees all that is accomplished by his anguish, he will be satisfied. And because of his experience, my righteous servant will make it possible for many to be counted righteous, for he will bear all their sins. 12 I will give him the honors of a victorious soldier, because he exposed himself to death. He was counted among the rebels. He bore the sins of many and interceded for rebels.”** Isaiah 53:3-12.

In order to understand and apply the power of what Jesus Christ accomplished on His cross, we're going to look at three key aspects of what Jesus did on the cross.

- 1. UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEM OF FORGIVENESS. Isaiah 5:3-5.** It is true that the cross is at the center of the evangelical faith and the cross is at the heart of the historic, biblical faith, and the truth is that this is not always acknowledged in churches that taut that their Christian but might not be. Here at CVCHURCH we are an evangelical church. That means we believe as Evangelical Christians that it is in and through Christ crucified, God substituted Himself for us as our sacrifice and bore our sins, dying in our place a death we deserved to die, in order that we might be restored to His favor and friendship and adopted into His family. Isaiah 5:3-5 graphically displays what His sacrifice entailed and why. **“He (the suffering servant-Jesus) was despised and**

rejected—a man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief. We turned our backs on Him and looked the other way. He was despised, and we did not care. 4 Yet it was our weaknesses (griefs) He carried; it was our sorrows that weighed Him down. And we thought His troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for His own sins! 5 But He was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed.”

It is offensive to our culture when we, the church declare that according to the Good News, the Gospel, the cross of Jesus Christ is the only ground on which God forgives sins. Have you ever heard any responses like the following. “Why does God not simply forgive us, without the mandating of the cross? John Stott writes in his marvelous book, **“The Cross of Christ”** which I have in my bibliography for you to read quotes a French cynic who said, **“The good God will forgive me; that’s His job and specialty.”** It is a very cavalier and self-centered sentiment. It’s like, my job is to sin, and God’s job is to forgive. The greatest and costliest gift that was ever given on Good Friday is reduced to a transaction and not to our sinfulness and to God’s Grace, Forgiveness and Redemption.

Another objection our culture raises to Christ’s sacrifice on the cross is, “If we sin against one another, we are required to forgive one another. Why can’t God practice what He preaches and be equally generous? No one’s death is necessary before we forgive each other. Why then does God make so much fuss about forgiving us and even declare it impossible without His sons’ “sacrifice for sin”? It sounds like a primitive superstition which modern people should long since have discarded. It is important that we ask and answer these questions. One of the more profound answers to these questions come from Archbishop Anselm in his great book **CUR DEUS HOMO? WHICH MEANS WHY GOD BECAME MAN.** **“If anybody imagines that God can simply forgive us as we forgive others, that person has ‘not yet considered the seriousness of sin,’ or literally ‘what a heavy weight sin is. Also, you have not yet considered the Holiness and the majesty of God.’** Church this is profound. It is when our perception of God and man, or of holiness and sin, are wrong that our understanding of the atonement is bound to be skewed and shortsighted, blinding us from the power and freedom of this most profound truth.

To truly understand, grasp and apply Christ’s forgiveness to your own life and to others it is mandatory to **A. GRASP THE GRAVITY OF SIN.** Genesis 2:15-17 God tells Adam what will happen if he disobeys His command to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

“The Lord God placed the man in the “Garden of Eden to tend and watch over it. 16 But the Lord God warned Him, “You may freely eat the fruit of every tree in the garden-17 except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If you eat its fruit, you are sure to die.” Our culture and much of those who call themselves Christians don’t take sin seriously and this blinds us from truly experiencing what Jesus did for us on the cross. The consequences of sin is spiritual and physical death. The moment Adam and Eve rebelled the disintegration and decay of everything we know began. Stott observes that the N.T uses five main Greek words for sin, which together portray the varying aspects of its destruction both passive and active. # 1. The familiar word most of us have heard is the Greek word **Hamartia.** It is the picture of missing the target, the failure to attain a goal. No matter how many times you shoot at the target, you miss it. Romans 3:23 states, **“For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard.”** # 2. The 2nd word is the Greek word

Adikia which means unrighteousness or iniquity. In the Bible, both "unrighteousness" and "iniquity" refer to the concept of being not righteous or just, but they have slightly different nuances. "Unrighteousness" generally describes a state of being not in alignment with God's standards of justice, while "iniquity" specifically points to a premeditated choice or willful violation of God's law or moral principles, often involving injustice or wrongfulness. It is a state of moral corruption, wickedness, and sinfulness, often implying a deliberate choice to deviate from God's law or righteousness. **Iniquity is related to the Hebrew word "Avon" which can mean "crookedness or perversion.** The words adikia and porneia speak of an inward corruption and perversion of character. #3 **Porneia. Generally, it means illicit sexual activity or sexual immorality.** It's a broad term that generally means illicit sexual activity or sexual immorality. It includes fornication, adultery, and prostitution. **The English word "pornography" is derived from "proneia."** These words are more passive. 4. **Parabasis** which according to John Stott "we may associate the similar **paraptoma, a 'trespass' or 'transgression', which is to step over a known boundary.** Sin is boundarylessness. It has a total disregard for God's boundaries which include His moral and ethical guidelines and laws. You can never trespass God's character and morals without severe harm to yourself. # 5. **Anomia.** It stands for 'lawlessness,' which is the total disregard or violation of a known law. Stott writes, "**In each case an objective criterion is implied, either a standard we fail to reach or a line we deliberately cross.**" As you can see, sin is involved and a direct attack against the holiness, glory, and perfection of who God is. Sin characterizes exactly who Satan is. He is diabolical, sinister and at his core he is rebellious, a liar and thief. His only intention towards you, your family and God is evil and total destruction. Satan and sin demands God's wrath and ultimate destruction. This is one of the reasons for the cross. 1 John 3:7-9 **"Dear children, don't let anyone deceive you about this: When people do what is right, it shows that they are righteous, even as Christ is righteous. 9 But when people keep on sinning, it shows that they belong to the devil, who has been sinning since the beginning. But the Son of God came to destroy the works of the devil. 9 Those who have been born into God's family can't keep on sinning because they are children of God.**

B. UNDERSTAND WHAT SIN IS. The emphasis of Scripture, however, as Stott has written "**Is on the godless self-centeredness of sin.**" Loved ones, every sin is a breach of what Jesus called 'the first and great commandment,' not just by failing to love God with all our being, but by actively refusing to acknowledge and obey Him as our Creator and Lord. Church, we have rejected the humble position of dependence which our createdness involves and made a bid for independence. If that wasn't bad enough, we have dared to proclaim our self-dependence, and our autonomy, which is to claim the position occupied by God alone which is exactly what the angel Lucifer did and became who is now known as the devil and Satan. You can read about his fall that is understood metaphorically and prophetically as Lucifer's fall from heaven in Isaiah 14:12-15 and Ezekiel 28:11-19.

Loved ones, as Stott writes, "**Sin is not a regrettable lapse from conventional standards; its essence is hostility to God, issuing in active rebellion against Him.**" Romans 8:7-9 declares, "**For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God's laws, and it never will. 8 that's why those who are still under the control of their sinful nature can never please God. 9 But you are not controlled by your sinful nature. You are controlled by the Spirit if you have the spirit of God living in you. (And remember that those who do not have the Spirit of Christ living in them do not belong to Him at all.). Sin has been described in terms of 'getting rid of the Lord God' in order to put ourselves in His place in a haughty**

spirit of ‘God-almightiness.’ Emil Brunner a profound German theologian has put it this way: “Sin is defiance, arrogance, the desire to be equal with God, which is the assertion of human independence over against God, the constitution of the autonomous reason, morality and culture.” It is fitting that Brunner entitled the book form which this quotation is **taken “MAN IN REVOLT.”**

I have presented to you this morning the problem of forgiveness by describing just how devastating sin is. It has permanently destroyed the human family if it was not for God’s Son, the divine sacrifice as the Lamb of God who came to present His life as a ransom and substitute for our lives has demonstrated the most selfless act of love that has ever been acted out in our history. Everything has changed for eternity. The point today is to get each one of us to see that every sin we commit is an expression of this spirit of revolt against God, so that can accept David’s confession: in Psalm 51:4. **“Against you, and you alone, have I sinned; I have done what is evil in your sight. You will be proved right in what you say, and your judgment against me is just.”** David committed adultery with Bathsheba and then killed her husband Uriah by sending him to the front of the battle to cover up his sin. Though David had committed these heinous offenses against both Bathsheba, Uriah, and the nation of Israel, yet it was God’s laws which he had broken and thereby ultimately sinned against God that he had chiefly offended.

God’s wrath is poured out against our rebellion, unrighteousness, iniquity, sexual sin and lawlessness. Isaiah said it best in chapter 53: 3-5. **He was despised and rejected—a man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief. We turned our backs on Him and looked the other way. He was despised, and we did not care. 4 Yet it was our weaknesses, griefs, and sorrows that weighed Him down. And we thought His troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for His own sins! 5 But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed.”** The problem with forgiveness is that we fail to understand how profound and how divine God’s forgiveness is if we don’t grasp the gravity, severity, and seriousness of our sin against the Almighty, Holy Trinitarian God. God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. Let’s pray together.