

Jesus, the Ultimate Joshua as 'Jehovah Saves'

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Matthew, a Preaching Series

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Bible Text: Matthew 1:21; Matthew 20:20-34

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So the book of Joshua 1 is where we are. I want to show you about three or four verses in the book of Joshua and then I'm going to take you to the book of Matthew. So you know the transition that's taking place between Moses and Joshua in the first chapter of the book of Joshua and you know that Joshua is probably not nervous like you and I would be nervous where, "Man, I wonder what it's going to be like on the first day on the job." No, Joshua has shed much blood. He has taken part in the first trouncing of the Amalekites in Exodus 16. That's where Joshua is first seen and then Joshua is seen as one of the two courageous spies in the book of Numbers.

Joshua is not the star of the show tonight but I do want you to notice a few things about Joshua. Look at the last two verses of the first chapter, rather the last three. "And they answered Joshua, saying, All that thou commandest us we will do, and whithersoever thou sendest us, we will go. According as we hearkened unto Moses in all things, so will we hearken unto thee: only the LORD thy God be with thee, as he was with Moses. Whosoever he be that doth rebel against thy commandment, and will not hearken unto thy words in all that thou commandest him, he shall be put to death: only be strong and of a good courage." Now, the name "Joshua" means "Jehovah saves," and so here's a man whose name means "Jehovah saves," and his courage comes as he is assured that God values his life more than anyone else's, otherwise why would the statement be so pronounced in the word of God, "If anyone disobeys Joshua, he gets to die?" So really, Joshua, a man whose name means "Jehovah saves," is placed sort of more important than everyone else in the nation to the point where God says through the people, "We'll not only obey you but if someone doesn't, they get to die." Interesting.

He has two men that he trusts the campaign of Jericho to. Look with me in chapter 2, verse 1, "Joshua the son of Nun sent out of Shittim two men to spy secretly, saying, Go view the land, even Jericho. And they went, and came into an harlot's house, named Rahab, and lodged there. And it was told the king of Jericho, saying, Behold, there came men in hither to night of the children of Israel to search out the country." So, I need you to stay with me for these details; they're very important once we get to the book of Matthew. Here's a man whose name means "Jehovah saves." If anyone disobeys him, they die, okay? He entrusts the conquest of the new kingdom west of the Jordan River to two trusted man called spies. Some people think that one of them ended up marrying

Rahab and shows up in Matthew 1's genealogy as the father of Boaz. So that's interesting. It doesn't really change the sermon but I just wanted you to know that.

We find out in verse 2, they go to a woman's house whose name is Rahab and she is not known, well, let's just say she was known as a businesswoman in town. She did have a business and she was apparently very well known because when they needed a place to hide, they just needed to act like customers at this business. And through an act of war, Joshua crushes a stalwart city. Let me say this again: through an act of bloody war, Joshua subdues a city where a city is demolished and the city's name is, help me? Yes, Jericho. Very good.

Now, I want you to look at verse 12 of this chapter. "Now therefore, I pray you," says Rahab, "swear unto me by the LORD, since I have shewed you kindness, that ye will also shew kindness unto my father's house, and give me a true token: And that ye will save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death. And the men answered her, Our life for yours, if ye utter not this our business." All right, let's say it again: two trusted men of the man whose name means "Jehovah saves" are sent in to conquest a country, at first peaceably, it ends up and bloodshed and they go to a harlot's house and they promise a life swap. If she will not speak of their business, they will guarantee her life through their life. Are you all with me? Okay, good. It's very important that we get these details.

So these two trusted men of the one whose name means "Jehovah saves," are sent in and they have relationship, not relations, God knows we need to clarify that in the context. They have a relationship with a person and guaranteed their life for hers if she would be true to her word. Now then, I want you to look, you know what happens with Jericho, right? They march around the city once a day for six days and then seven times on the seventh day. You've known this story, I should say, and I want to be careful when I say the word "story." It doesn't mean it's a fable, you know the historical record of what happened to Jericho.

I was reviewing an article that I was reading in "Biblical Archaeological Review." I had it saved in my email and I was looking at it and it shows evidence that there is a Jericho that is very, very archaeological, very historic and it has toppled walls that fell outward. It really fell straight down but they have uncovered it and then there is a city today known as Jericho. There are two separate locations very close to one another. In any case, after the conquest of Jericho, I want you to see what God says about the person who attempts to rebuild it and this is where I was getting nervous of Pastor Weiss this morning thinking he was going to preach my sermon. That's always nerve-racking because I'm not, I don't like winging things and I was thinking about this message for a while.

So look please at verse 24 of chapter 6, "And they burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein: only the silver, and the gold, and the vessels of brass and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD. And Joshua saved," oh, I love that word, think about it now, "Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household, and all that she had; and she dwelleth in Israel even unto this day; because she hid the

messengers, which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho." Now, I want you to remember there was a scarlet thread, a scarlet cord rather, hanging in the window. There are so many pictures of Jesus in this chapter and I'm simply not going to do a thorough job of showing you them all because this is not the main point. You need to know this to get to the main point.

Look at verse 26, "Joshua adjured them at that time, saying, Cursed be the man before the LORD, that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho: he shall lay the foundation thereof in his firstborn, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it." In other words, it's going to cost him his family if he tries to rebuild the city. Listen now: he will be cursed and his offspring will be cursed. Get that. He will be cursed. His offspring will be cursed. "So the LORD was with Joshua."

Now then, I want us to look at the book of Matthew 1. Matthew 1, and we won't leave the book of Matthew other than if perhaps I quote a Scripture or two along the way. We will stay in the book of Matthew, okay? The book of Matthew 1. I want to be here for about five minutes and then maybe seven, and then we'll move on to another chapter within the book of Matthew and park it, okay? But I need you to remember everything that we saw in the book of Joshua. It's very important. Very important. Some of the key elements again: two trusted men promising a ransom, a trade of lives, a trading of lives for this person that they intend on saving. Is everyone with me? Okay, this is good stuff. Okay. And what does Joshua's name mean again? "Jehovah saves." Good.

Matthew 1. I want you to notice as we are going into Matthew that Matthew assumes that his listeners or his readers have heard the Old Testament. Everything that the New Testament authors write comes with some assumptions. The book of Matthew is no different. The writers of Matthew assume that you, sister, know the book of Joshua. Now, you may not because you have not attended synagogue every Sabbath day of your upbringing but they expect you, sister, and you, brother, and you, brother, to know the book of Joshua among the other canonical books of the Old Testament. They expect that you are a reader of the Scriptures because you're Jewish and this is to Jews. So they have a little bit of an expectation that when they say things in the book of Matthew, they are not going to have to explain it because you know your Old Testament.

Now then, having said that, I want you to notice verse 1 of Matthew 1, "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ." The reader would remember that the last time they saw that in the Bible was Genesis 5:1 where Adam was introduced in this manner, "The book of the generations of Adam." Right away the reader would have thought, "Ah, Matthew is comparing, by aid of the Holy Spirit, Matthew is comparing this Jesus, the Christ, to Adam." He's going to be as Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 15, the last Adam.

Verse 1 again, "the son of David." All of a sudden we understand Matthew expects his readers to know that Jesus is going to be a king in Jerusalem. True enough, yes? All right, the end of the verse, he's the "son of Abraham." Right away Matthew expects you to think of Adam and David and Abraham and he expects you to know because he's introducing the book this way that God is going to make Jesus the fulfillment of

Abraham, that in him all the nations of the earth would be blessed. And indeed, through the great commission today, we are seeing all the nations of the earth being blessed, aren't we? God help us to continue to be faithful to that calling. All of us are expected to fulfill that calling in some manner.

All right, now, some are not so obvious. Think about Moses with me, if you would. There are a lot of parallels between Moses and Jesus; there are some very, very articulate in the book of Matthew and some not so much. Let me give you a couple. Remember when Moses was being born, the king of Egypt was killing all the children. Do you remember that? And here in Matthew 2 when Jesus is to be born, the wise men, as you know, come and seek Jesus from Herod and Herod ends up doing what? Killing all the children, and so right away Matthew, humanly speaking because Matthew although it is a product of God it is also a product of the man God chose named Matthew. That's why Matthew doesn't write like John. Matthew doesn't write like Paul. Matthew writes like Matthew, a tax collector, and so therefore he writes differently than everyone else and Matthew is seeing in the way that he relays, "Wait a minute," the reader is thinking, "This sounds an awful lot like Moses."

So in two short chapters, you have Jesus being compared to Adam, Abraham, David, Moses, and then it even gets even more stark with Moses. When you think about Moses, for 40 days and 40 nights he went up on Mount Sinai, didn't he? He got a law from the Lord, didn't he? Ten Commandments. Do you remember this? All right, and you remember that he came down from the mountain and taught the people and the Old Testament brought death, didn't it? Well, in Matthew 4, we find Jesus going to the wilderness for 40 days and 40 nights and then instead of coming down from the mountain, he goes up on a mountain and teaches people the Sermon on the Mount, and all through that sermon, he tells them what Moses said and what they heard Moses say which wasn't always the same, and then he tells them what he says.

So all through the book of Matthew, Matthew is comparing Jesus and he's basically saying Jesus is better than Adam; he's better than Abraham; he's better than David; he's better than Moses; and he goes even further than that, for at Jesus' baptism at age 30, he begins his high priestly ministry and at the Lord's supper he says, "This is the blood of the new covenant which is shed for the remission of sins." He then stands in front of the high priest at his trial on the morning of his crucifixion and the high priest disqualifies himself according to Leviticus 21:10 where it says a high priest cannot rend his clothes, and right there in front of Jesus, the high priest tears his clothes and becomes disqualified. Well, good thing the Old Testament was only in effect for about another nine hours and so Jesus is shown to be better than Aaron.

So we should not be surprised when we get to Matthew 1:21 and the angel comes to Joseph in a dream and says, "Here's what you're going to name your son. She," Mary, "shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." I'm a big believer that God speaks through just about everything. When I say just about, that means I'm not courageous to say everything. That doesn't mean that I think anything happens halfheartedly or haphazardly. But humanly speaking, wouldn't

you agree with me that God could have named his Son just about anything? For example, he could have named him Joel which means "Jehovah is God," and everyone would have thought, "Wow, this Jesus, this son of David, the son of Abraham, the mediator of the new covenant, the new Adam, the new Moses, he's going to be just like Joel." Or he could have named him Zephaniah which means "Jehovah has a treasured people." Well, certainly that's true of Jesus, it's true of God but it's not what he was trying to get across to his people. He could've named him Zechariah which means "Jehovah remembers," and then everyone would have thought this new Adam, this new Moses, this new Abraham, this new Aaron, this new Moses, he is supposed to be like Zechariah and they'd go back to Zechariah and do some searching to find out the character of the Son of God. All right, or he could have called him Jeremiah which means "appointed by Jehovah," and everyone would have thought, "Well, he's appointed by Jehovah," and certainly Jesus the Christ was and is appointed by Jehovah. Sure. Sure. He could have named him Obadiah which means "the servant of Jehovah," and everyone would have thought, "Well, let's find more out about Obadiah, the servant of Jehovah," and certainly Jesus could have been named Obadiah because as Isaiah 42 says, he "was and is the servant of Jehovah." Are you with me? All right, and he could've also named him Elijah which means "Jehovah is my God," and certainly Jesus could say that Jehovah was his God for he said on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He said to Thomas, rather Mary Magdalene on Sunday morning of resurrection morning, "I go to my God and your God." Certainly Jesus could say Jehovah was his God.

Okay, but that wasn't the name that the Father picked out to send through the angel to Joseph to have Mary name her son. He could've named him Isaiah which means "Jehovah has saved," but no. God wanted you and I and the Jewish reader to think about something particularly when we heard the name Jesus. The name Jesus comes from the Greek name Yesus which comes from the Hebrew name Yeshua which is where we also get our English name Joshua and it means "Jehovah saves." So both Joshua and Jesus come from different languages and they both mean "Jehovah saves." Therefore when you think about Jesus, God wanted you to know not that Jehovah has saved, not that he had a servant, not that he had an appointed people, not that he is remembering things as if he could forget, but rather that he has servants, that he can be your God. No, God wanted us chiefly to know, first and foremost, that Jehovah's character, his fiber is that he is now saving. Now saving. It's not something that he has done, it's not something we hope he did, it's not something we read about in biographies it's something, he does, he saves. Oh, isn't that good?

Well, what is he saved from. Verse 21, "he saves his people from their sins." Now, think about the character of God that is continually finding Christians and saving them from their sins. You know, I read a quote today that said that sin is a mighty fine subject when we're talking about someone else. Usually I think when we're talking about sin, I'm thinking about yours. I'm thinking about yours. I'm thinking about yours. Because I'm usually blind to mine. But I get great comfort tonight in knowing that the Messiah, the one better than Adam, better than Abraham, better than David, better than Joshua, better than Moses, oh, wait a minute, he is actually saving his people from their sins. I understand the moment of salvation that when we put our faith in Christ he saves us from

the wrath of God, but even today as we trust the Lord in victory over sin in our life whatever it is, and what occurred to me during this morning's message is the reason that we're not too concerned about not touching the accursed thing is because, quite frankly, we're not too concerned about losing our boldness and that's what I took away. I thought, "What sin am I hiding?" Because usually if you notice from this morning's passage, we don't know that we're without boldness until we are right in the middle of the situation wherein we need it.

So I wanted you to see this. Then I wanted to show you some irony about this. The one whose name means "Jehovah saves," the one whose name means "Jehovah saves," is in the very next chapter being saved by Jehovah. Right? Look at chapter 2. Who does God use to get Jesus to Egypt out of the clutches of Herod but his earthly adoptive father, Joseph. And all of a sudden I realized that God is saving his Son from the human hand of Herod, we find from Revelation 12 it's from the hand of Satan. Remember, the dragon stood before the woman waiting for her to bear the man child who was caught up. Do you remember that? So really Herod was an agent of Satan, we get that. So God saves his Son, Jesus, from the hands of Herod who is being used by Satan and he uses Joseph, a carpenter. What a blessing. We don't have to be superstars to be used of God.

So I hear that Jesus needed some time in this humanity. I know sometimes we think Jesus didn't sin, that means he didn't scrape his knee and he never smelled bad after he played ball. No, no, no, he was human. He had thirst and he had emotions and he was disappointed sometimes. I'm not saying he was full of doubt. I'm not saying he was full of sin. I'm saying that he was a human being. All human being. Remember, you don't have to be a sinner to be a human being. Adam proved that. He was a human being for quite a while before he was a sinner. So in any case, if Jesus needs to be "saved from danger during his human life here on earth," I should probably be okay with God using people in my life to save me out of trouble. Yeah, it's not a sign of weakness, it's a sign of God's involvement.

Now then, let's go to the meat of the matter in Matthew 20. The context is that the disciples and Jesus are making their last approach to Jerusalem. Look at Matthew 20:17, "And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them," we're going to Jerusalem. "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again." Now, I need you to pay good attention as we're reading through this because I'm going to give you a few comparisons between Jesus and Joshua and I'm going to bring some application and then we're going to be done. So really, follow along with me.

Verse 20, "Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping him," this is Salome, if you compare it to another Gospel, "and desiring a certain thing of him. And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom. But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of

the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able. And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father." Now, let's get this, this is the first thing I want you to see, here we go: are they in the kingdom yet? Help me. No, okay, so they're not in the kingdom yet but we have two men that want to be trusted with the kingdom already. Yes? Okay, just want to make sure.

Now look at verse 24, "And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren." Now, I want you to see that this is a fingerprint of God thing on his word. This is how we know that the Scripture is a production of God. It is a product of God. No man could write this stuff. No way, alright? Now, you have 10 people upset with the two guys. 10 and two. It kind of reminds me of the 12 spies, 10 were and two were... Okay, so that's good, but what I want you to notice particularly was that we have a comparison happening here. "Oh, you're reaching." Okay, hold the phone. We're getting there.

Look at verse 25, "But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them." That word "dominion" there, it's very simple. If you were to turn that into a verb, "you know that the Gentiles dominate one another."

Verse 26, "But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister." Tell me, James and John, sons of thunder, sons of Zebedee, sons of Salome, cousins of Jesus through probably Salome and Mary who were probably sisters. Okay, question: they wanted to be key in conquering a kingdom, yes? Isn't that what they were expecting with the Romans? Okay, they wanted to be key in conquering a kingdom and if they learned anything from the Old Testament, what did they learn? How did they learn that that would happen? I see nods. Be brave. Be brave. Probably bloodshed, right? Okay, Jesus is saying, "It's not happening in that way. That's how the Gentiles do it," right?

Okay now, look at verse 27, "And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister," look here, "and to give his life a ransom for many." What did the two spies say to Rahab in Jericho? "Our life for yours." Then it says in chapter 6 that they came and saved her. How? Because they promised a ransom of their life for hers. Okay?

Now, so far you might be thinking, "Okay, I don't see Joshua in this yet." Okay, that's fine, but now look at verse 29, "And as they departed from," say it, "Jericho." Why do you think they are having that conversation in Jericho? Because of the record of Joshua. Two men sent into a kingdom that eventually is conquered by having dominion. Who wouldn't want to be part of that? No wonder James and John said, "Yeah, we can be baptized like that. Sign us up. Give me a gun. I can go over and take care of that business." No wonder they were ready to drink that cup. Who wouldn't want to be a

warrior and a decorated general. James and John certainly wanted to be? And who wouldn't want to be a part of a snatch and grab operation where we go in and get Rahab and her household and yank them out? But here is Jesus saying, "Well, here is how this is going to be done. I'm going to give my life a ransom for many." And where are they? Coming out of Jericho.

Now verse 30, "And, behold," what did they see just outside Jericho? "Behold, two blind men sitting by the way side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David. And the multitude rebuked them." Now why would you rebuke some blind people that need to be healed? Here's why: because they were considered cursed. Do you remember John 9 when the disciples came up with Jesus, John 9 and they said, "Lord, who sinned, him or his parents?" And at the end of the passage the Pharisees are saying, "We know that you were born in sin and you ask us about the Messiah?" They wouldn't even give respect to the man because he was blind and thought about as a horrible sinner because he was blind. Now think about it: not only was it the perception of people that he could have been a sinner but it was a perception that even according to John 9:3 with the disciples, his parents could have been sinners. Therefore it was in the perception of the reader that both the parents and the children were cursed if there were offspring that were born blind. Help me now. Who was considered cursed if they would rebuild the walls of Jericho? The man and his family.

So here now we come out of Jericho and we come across two men that are considered cursed and in verse 31, "And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace: but they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David." And look what Jesus did when those cursed human beings spoke out to him. He stood still. He wasn't flippant like Joshua. Oh no, no, no, he's not just better than Moses. Not just better than Aaron. Not just better than Adam. Not just better than Abraham. Not just better than David. He's even better than Joshua.

You see, there are four limitations that come out to us in this passage that Joshua had. Here they are. In verses 20 through 24, Joshua equipped those whom he deemed suitable. In other words, he called them because they were suitable. Jesus takes those two men in these verses and says, "You're not ready for this. You're not equipped, but you will indeed drink of the baptism. You will drink of the cup." Look at what he says in verse 23, "You will indeed drink of the cup and have the baptism that I have had." Do you see that? So here you have two spies in Joshua. He sends them because they're good to go. They're ready for the job, they're equipped and so he sends them. Jesus says, "You're not ready to go. You're not equipped. You're not as ready as you think you are but you are going to be sent and you're going to die." That's the first limitation of Joshua, is Joshua only called those who were, humanly speaking, Grade A people. Do I need to tell you in this culture of war we've been in for almost 13 years now in the United States, can I tell you that you can find plenty of evidence of what a real warrior looks like. These men were Grade A men and the two in this passage needed mom to talk to Jesus.

Number two, you might notice verses 25 to 27. Joshua could only conquest a kingdom with means of the sword and Jesus said, "You conquest kingdoms by becoming servants to those kingdoms." Better than Joshua.

Number three, you might notice in verse 28, the best Joshua could do was promise the temporal life of Rahab and her family. Not eternal life, the temporary life of Rahab and her family through the death, or at least the promise of death, to two men and, by the way, even if, let's just say they didn't keep their word. Were they really able to keep her alive if the wrong person got to the house first? If the king of Jericho found out that she was a traitor, could they really promise what they were saying? No, and the very, very best they could do was give up two lives and save a household, but Jesus says, "I'm going to give up my life and be a ransom for many." Jesus is better. He provides eternal life for many, not temporary life for a few.

Lastly, you might notice verses 29 through 34, and we see that Jesus doesn't ignore the cursed. He promises a different quality of life for those who are cursed.

Listen, I've already shown you that Jesus' own character reflects the Father. The Father's character is that he saves people from their sin and not just people, his people. Contextually, I know that you can see that he is in the context talking about the Jewish people, saving the Jewish people from their sin. But we get 19 chapters later in the book of Matthew and Jesus says, "No, I came to save many and I came to dominate Gentiles by giving my life for many." I'm a Gentile and I've been dominated by the Lord. How so? Because he threatened my life? No, because he gave his life as a ransom, a trade. He took on my curse and that's why we see that he is able to bless those that are cursed.

Now, in our world today, even in churchianity, we think that someone might be too past being saved. "They are as good as cursed. They are as good as in hell." But no, that is not the lesson of Matthew 20. Jesus walks by people and as they call out out of despair, we don't find anywhere that they had saving faith, but because they simply cried out, Jesus stopped and paid attention to some people who were under a curse. Friends, we are not past the saving character of God. That derelict or drunk or loved one that you think is past, that religious person. Look, I grew up in Sun Prairie, I know this world in this part of the country is cold to the Gospel, but I don't think it's because the Gospel has gotten old to them, I think it's because they are unlearned of the Gospel. It is the character of God not to give me a three car garage. That is the prosperity Gospel. It is not the character of God to answer a prayer and give me heaven. That is an easy prayerism Gospel. It is the character of God for people to put their faith in Jesus and he saves them from the wrath of God and then continually saves his people from their sin. Every time you utter the name of Jesus, you ought to be thinking, "God came today to save me from my sins."

So what is it? Is it an attitude problem? Is it a problem with authority? Is it a financial issue that because maybe of poor financial management that happens from time to time in a country with 17 trillion in debt. What can you say? We're good learners, right? We have sins that we need to be saved from and Jesus says, "Good, it's my character to save you

from your sins. It's my character to save my people from their sins because I'm better than Joshua."

Our marriages, are they cursed? No, no, no. I know it's churchianity. It's proper for us, but even today, tonight, I'm dealing with two families in my church that are convinced their marriages are done. Done and I want you to know that it is not the character of the Lord to walk by when people cry out to him. He can heal marriages that are considered cursed. I don't care if someone way back there said, "Anyone that tries this thing is cursed and so are their kids." Jesus says, "Nope, I will walk by and when you cry out to me I will stand still and remove the curse." After all, Galatians 3:13, he was nailed to a tree and became a curse for us.

Are your neighbors cursed? I know they haven't talked about God. I know they're good Lutherans. I know the part of the country I'm in. I know that they love their churchianity. I know they are Christer Christians: Christmas and Easter. I get that. I understand that when you see them on Mother's Day you want to preach on hell because the next time you'll see them is Christmas. I get that. I understand the frustration but I just want us to remember that they are not cursed beyond the reach of God. Cursed, yes. Under the condemnation of God, yes. Under the wrath of God, yes. But not beyond the reach of Christ whose name means "Jehovah saves." I think you get my point.

Let's pray.