

Psalm 69: 16-21; “Draw near to my Soul”, A Communion Sermon delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on June 5th, 2016, in the Afternoon Worship Service. part of a series on “Christ’s passion, death, and Resurrection as noted in the Psalms and remembered”.

Let us understand, as we being our study, that there is no eternal punishment to be borne by a Christian for their sins, because God’s wrath has been turned away from them and has been laid upon Christ. This is what the Christian believes, and they receive that truth into their heart to change them. “There is therefore no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” But there are, none-the-less, sufferings for a Christian to undergo that are part of the Father’s loving discipline exercised towards them when they stray from the path of righteousness. And then there are also sufferings which come to the believer because they are consciously identifying themselves with Christ and with what is right. David experienced both, as we see in these verses, and we will experience both as well. God could answer David’s prayers because God the Father was looking at the sufferings that His only-begotten Son would undergo for him in the future, while David was praying for deliverance, even before Christ died. God can answer your prayers for salvation, for help, and for deliverance because He has regard today, right now, for the sufferings of His Son which took place two thousand years ago in the past. This is the glory and the power of the salvation which is found in Jesus Christ. David looked forward to Christ’s 1st Coming, in order to have his prayers answered; and we look back, to the cross and redemption accomplished. What was it that Christ had to do, to purchase our redemption so that our prayers for deliverance would be heard? This applies to both the time when we were seeking forgiveness for the first time, as well as other times after we are converted. We will come to the table in a few minutes and I hope that you will remember 4 things that the Lord Jesus had to suffer for you so that your prayer would be answered: “Draw near to my soul and redeem it”.

1st of all- Jesus had to suffer His Father’s hiding His face from Him. (Verse17)

David says in verse 16, “Hear me, O Lord, for Your lovingkindness is good; turn to me according to the multitude of Your tender mercies.” “Do not hide your face from your servant.” David knew how great and extensive the goodness of the Lord was. He calls the number of ways that the Lord shows His goodness, “a multitude”. His mercies would be too many to count. He calls them tender mercies. He knew that God is always tender in the way that He thinks upon believers; there is a gentleness, an awesome thoughtfulness in God, as He thinks upon those who are His own. I do not know if David had written Psalm 31 by this time in his life, but perhaps he was thinking of the words of verse 19, “Oh how great is your goodness, which You have laid up for those who fear You, which You have prepared for those who trust in You in the presence of the sons of men!” “You shall hide them in the secret place of Your presence from the plots of man; You shall keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues.” But now David pleads, “Do not hide Your face from Your servant, for I am in trouble; hear me speedily.” “Draw near to my soul, and redeem it.” “Deliver me from my enemies”, he cries out in prayer to God. He does not yet sense the presence of God with him, or understand God to be coming to his aid.

Now let’s think of Jesus Christ. If anyone ever knew just how good the lovingkindness of God is, it certainly would be God’s son. God the Father always had a great love and delight in His Son from all eternity. He always had a face which was beaming approval at

Him; always had a face that was shining upon Him. He had, always and forever in the past, been satisfied with His Son; and Christ Himself had never known a time when this love, and the expression of it on “His Father's face”, had ever been anything but pure approval and perfect satisfaction in all that He did. Proverbs 8: 29 says, “When He assigned to the sea its limit, so that the waters would not transgress His command, when He marked out the foundations of the earth, then I was beside him as a master craftsman; and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him, rejoicing in His inhabited world, and my delight was with the sons of men.” God the Father and God the Son planned all this together; the creation of the world and all things in it; and the Lord Jesus knew how good everything was that was created.

But now, He who was the “Brightness of His Father's glory, Sunshine of His Father's face” was in real trouble, surrounded by enemies; those of His own people who should have been His friends, and even His worshipers. They do not believe in the good things that He had come to do for them. They did not believe that He was their Messiah, the promised Seed of the promises given to Abraham. They were giving their vote and approval to put Him to death. Many of them did not understand that even though they were religious, that they did not know God. They were all for, making Him suffer for telling them the truth. They arrested Him in the garden, and they took Him before their Sanhedrim. They found him guilty on false charges, and they convinced the governor, Pontius Pilate to have Him crucified. They pierced His hands and his feet. And He most certainly knew that all of this was in accordance with His Father's plan, and He willingly agreed to it. He could face all of this as the Son of God, beloved of His Father. But now, as He looked down from the cross, He realized that something was happening that was worse than all that had gone before; His Father was turning His face away from Him! “Oh Father,” He cries, “Do not hide Your face from Me!” “I am your servant.” This was worse than all that had gone before.

To be forsaken by His Father; to Christ, nothing could be more grievous. Think of the best friend that you have, the person that you are closest to in this world; and think of them hiding their face from you, and forsaking you, at the very time when you needed them the most. This was what the Lord Jesus endured without blaming God His father. He knew that God was holy even so; but how much it hurt. Do you see, all you who are beloved of the Father, that Jesus had to do this so that you would be saved? Jesus had to be forsaken so that you would never be forsaken eternally; or at any point in your life and experience of knowing God and walking with Him. And you should understand that Jesus had to undergo this so that you would be better able to endure the trials that you will go through as a Christian. Sometimes a Christian may feel forsaken by God, but they should not believe it if they have repented of their sins, and are trying to do His will. He has said: “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” And will He go back on this promise? He never will. So you must teach your feelings that they are wrong, if you feel forsaken of God. Blessed are they that mourn over their sins, for they shall be comforted.

2nd – I would have you to remember that Jesus suffered reproach, shame, and dishonor, for everyone who believes in Him.

Verse 19 says: “You know my reproach, my shame, and my dishonor; My adversaries are all before You.” “Reproach has broken my heart, and I am full of heaviness.” When David was driven out of Jerusalem by his own son Absalom, there were many things said of him, and to him, which were not true, and they were not kind. He had to bear this reproach because, in regard to his sin with Bathsheba, there were certain disciplinary consequences that came to him from God. But we should also notice that the conclusions

of some of the people around him, about what was happening to him, were entirely wrong. See 2nd Samuel 16: 7 and 8. So also, there were many things that were said to the Lord Jesus, to His face, during His ministry, that were slanders; things that were malicious, and that were untrue, which He had to bear for our sakes. A reproach is a charge that is brought against a person which is designed to make it evident to them that the things that they have done, or the way that they have lived their life, is foolish or wrong or stupid. It is when another person, or a group of people, speak against you to prove something about you in order to establish your real or supposed guilt. Jesus was guilty of nothing. But, in some people's minds, He was to be blamed anyway. This was what many of the Jewish people of His day thought when He came preaching to them that they needed to be saved. The reason that Jesus came into the world was to bear witness to the truth. But the false religious system that the Jewish leaders had built up around the Scriptures and the Law of God was at odds with what Jesus came to bring to them, and to teach them. He had come to set them free from sin and to correct their false impressions of what true religion really was; and yet, they reproached him for it.

You see, this was the kind of reproach that Jesus bore for our sakes. Perhaps you can think about this truth and apply it to you your own life, as you once were, before you became a Christian. You were willing to reproach Christ too. You were not willing to say that you were a slave to sin. You were willing to reject the Bible as being the Word of God. You were willing to dishonor Christ by rejecting His identity as the Only Savior and Lord of sinners, and even to dishonor Him before others. Others needed to be saved from their sins, but you didn't believe that you needed to be saved. You thought that you were a better person than that! You see, this is what Jesus had to bear from you, and for you. Are you not thankful today that it says in Hebrews 12: 2, that He "endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God?" Remember what He did for You on that day that He died, when He bore the reproach of wicked men in His life and in His death; that this was done also, for your reproach of Him. But now, if you see this, you should also be able to understand, that bearing the reproach of unbelieving people that are trying to be religious, but they are really self-righteous, is part of what it means to be a true Christian. Let us remember how meekly and patiently the Lord Jesus bore these things for us, and study to be like Him, ourselves.

3rd – Jesus had to suffer the loss of all comfort and encouragement from people around Him. (Verse 20)

"I looked for someone to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none." This is what Jesus had to bear for you and me. "He was despised and rejected of men," it says in Isaiah 53: 3. It goes on to say that "He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." "And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him." At the cross God not only hid His face from His Son, but we also, as it were, "hid our faces from Him". "He was despised, and we did not esteem Him." Reproach, and not being esteemed or pitied, have a way of breaking the heart. They have a way of killing the spirit of a man and they take away his joy and peace. Jesus suffered in this awful way, for us as well. When David was going through his trials with his son Absalom, at least some of the people remained loyal to him. But with the Lord Jesus, He was surrounded by many enemies; Satan, demons, the self-righteous leaders of the Jewish people, and others who were arrayed against Him for political reasons. "My adversaries are all before You," Jesus reminds His Father in prayer. "I looked for someone to take pity, but there was none." Not even your disciples, Lord Jesus? No not even the disciples. "I looked for comforters, but I found none." Truly, this

is a sad comment upon human nature and should show us the reason that each one of us needed Jesus to die for us. In verse 20 of our text it says that “reproach has broken my heart, and I am full of heaviness.” Let us remember this, and come down to the front now, and assemble together to take the supper.

4th – Jesus had to suffer great thirst on behalf of His people.

Verse 21 says: “They also gave me gall for my food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.” There were actually two offers made to the Lord Jesus when it was understood that He was “dying of thirst”. Mark 15: 22 says, “And they brought Him to the place Golgotha, which is translated, Place of a Skull.” “Then they gave Him wine mingled with myrrh to drink, but He did not take it.” These offers Jesus consistently refused, and He did so for our sakes. His refusal was so that the pain, and His clearness and consciousness of feeling that pain, would not be deadened in any way. In this offer of the wine mingled with myrrh, there was a mockery that was refused, and a terrible thirst that was unquenched. Jesus “endured the reproach and despised the shame” here. This was on our behalf. He was saying, “My sufferings are not for myself, but for sinners everywhere, so that they will have their hunger and thirst for righteousness satisfied.” “I will thirst so that they may drink, and drink deeply of what I have come to do here for them.” “I will suffer thirst now, so that the one who believes in Me shall never thirst.”

And then there was also the second time that wine was offered to Him, and that was toward the close of His time upon the cross. In John Chapter 19, verse 28, it says: “After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, ‘I thirst!’” “Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there; and they filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on hyssop, and put it to His mouth.” “So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, ‘It is finished.’” “And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.” You see, in the first case, there was something that Jesus refused to drink in His sufferings for us, and that was the sour wine mingled with gall. He wanted to feel all the pain that our sins deserved. And then there was also something that He received at the end of His time on the cross; that was this sour wine. Why did He accept this second offer and drink? I believe that it was because Jesus knew that all things had already been accomplished. All He needed to do now was to drink, and He could then dismiss His spirit. For, you see, Jesus did not die of a broken heart. He died with a shout of triumph. When He had received the sour wine, He said, ‘It is finished.’” “And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.” Mark 15: 37 says, “And Jesus cried out with a loud voice, and breathed His last.” He was saying: “I am triumphing through these sufferings.” “I will receive the sour wine now as a token of this triumph.”

In our text in Psalm 69, verse 18, we are given another insight into what Jesus was praying at the time of His triumphant death. He is saying, “Draw near to my soul and redeem it.” “Deliver me because of my enemies.” This prayer was answered by the Father in Jesus’ being raised from the dead, which fact we also come to remember at this table now. I hope that you will remember now the things that Jesus suffered for you; the things that I have mentioned to you from this text, and that as you eat this bread and drink this cup that you will remember God hiding His face from Jesus so that He could make His face shine upon you. Remember the reproach, the shame, and the dishonor done to Him so that you could be highly regarded by God. Remember the loss of comfort and encouragement that He experienced, so that you might have eternal comfort. And remember that He was thirsty so that you will never thirst spiritually. May the Lord feed your soul with these truths today.

