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St. Paul's Lutheran Church
2100 16th Street SW
Austin, MN 55912-1749
Pastor Ted Barthels
Sermon preached on
March 1, 2015
2nd Sunday in Lent

Scripture Lessons: Isaiah 53:4-12 Passion: Gethsemane.
Hymns: 149; 154; 652; 158:1,6 (242)

Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and our Lord
and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Sermon Text: Hebrews 2:10-15

10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom
are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain
of their salvation perfect through sufferings. 11 For both He who
sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for
which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, 12 saying:

“I will declare Your name to My brethren;

In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You.”

13 And again:

“I will put My trust in Him.”

And again:

“Here am I and the children whom God has given Me.”

14 Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood,
He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He
might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil,
15 and release those who through fear of death were all their
lifetime subject to bondage. (NKJV)

This is the Word of God.

Sanctify us, oh Lord, through Your truth. Your Word is truth.
Amen.

In Christ Jesus, our Crucified Savior, Dear fellow Redeemed:

INTRO: Jesus was quite the annoyance.

Well, that was how He was perceived by the Jewish establishment, the members of the Jewish High Council made up of the different spiritual leaders of Israel. The chief priests were members of the party called the Sadducees. They were very jealous of Jesus popularity. And perhaps humanly speaking, with some cause, for the Romans were known to depose unpopular leaders and put in place others, hoping to find a more compliant local government. They had already deposed Annas as High Priest and appointed Caiaphas in his place. Jesus' popularity made them uncomfortable. They agreed with Caiaphas' conclusion that it was expedient that Jesus die, and the whole nation not perish.

The Pharisees were also upset with Jesus for He was openly critical of their manner of life and the pseudo righteousness they boasted and paraded before the people. They had been the model for every Jewish mother to hold before her children, and now this Jesus, a tradesman with no formal education, was teaching the people about the kingdom of God, and possessed an authority that eluded them as well as the scribes and local rabbis. To secure their place in Jewish society Jesus had to die. Yes, Jesus' enemies had their reasons why they thought Jesus had to die, but even Pilate was able to see through these reasons as being vain, and their charges against Jesus as being hypocritical. It was all political gamesmanship at its worst.

But Jesus did have to die, they just didn't understand why. Jesus explained it all to His disciples. He explained it to them carefully and repeatedly, but they didn't get it. They couldn't understand, more than that, at that point in their lives and in their relationship with Jesus, they didn't want to understand. They did understand the danger. When Jesus announced to the disciples that He was returning to Judea they saw it as dangerous for them all. We read in John's gospel; **“Then Thomas, who is called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, ‘Let us also go, that we may die with Him’”** (John 11:14).

Jesus understood that He had to die, and He understood why it was necessary that He die. He included it in His course of instruction with the disciples. We read in Mark's gospel:

Mark 8:31-32 And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. 32 He spoke this word openly.

Jesus taught them that this **MUST HAPPEN**, but they didn't want to hear, and they didn't understand, not until later, after Jesus had risen from the dead.

It seems that many people today still find the cross of Jesus offensive. They say that one can hardly believe in a God that wanted a human sacrifice, and such a bloody, cruel sacrifice at that. They don't understand because one can only grasp this marvel of love by faith. By faith the Holy Spirit leads us to a true and certain knowledge concerning --

THEME: Why Jesus Had to Die.

Out text lays the reasons before us in glorious fashion. The first point that is made for why Jesus had to die was –

I. To Complete His Mission of Salvation.

Hebrews 2:10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

In these words we face the marvel of God's magnificent grace. We are reminded of His Godhead, and exactly what that means to us. He is the Maker of all things. All things were not only made by the Father through the Son and with the Holy Spirit, but they were made at God's pleasure to serve His will. We are here for Him. He didn't make the world to fulfill our will. We weren't even around, and any consideration of our needs is evidence of His loving kindness, not our control or superiority. Any thoughts of man being superior to God or ranking higher than God in the existence of this creation are ridiculous on their face and is idolatry.

We are reminded of Almighty God's gracious good will toward a lost and fallen mankind. He would bring many sons to glory.

1 John 3:1 "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us that we should be called children of God."

He wants us, and not just a few, but the masses of humanity, to be brought to glory, and so He sent His Son into the world to be our Savior. It is at this point that this opening verse of our text makes the transition from expressing the gracious will of God behind sending His Son into the world, to the manner in which His Son, would fulfill that will, fulfill His mission as our Savior.

The Captain of our salvation was made perfect, that is fulfilled His role, His mission on earth through suffering. In the course of His public ministry Jesus did so many things both wonderful and kind for so many people. In these things we see His life of love and know that in all this He fulfilled the law for us, and secured a righteousness for us that we could not attain on our own. But that alone did not complete His mission of salvation. He had not fulfilled His role as Messiah until He went forward to Jerusalem, and was taken captive by His enemies and suffered many things at their hands, and was crucified. In His sufferings and death Jesus completed His mission, making it possible to bring many sons to the glory of everlasting life in heaven.

However our text does not stop with this glorious observation, it adds on that it was necessary for Jesus to die --

II. To Be Our Brother.

In our text we read of how it was necessary for the Son of God to become incarnate.

Hebrews 2:11-13 For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, 12 saying: "I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You."

13 And again: "I will put My trust in Him."

And again: "Here am I and the children whom God has given Me."

The Son was begotten of the Father. The Son is the One who sanctifies. It was the Son who was begotten of the Father who should be the one to sanctify those who were created by the Father. So **“God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him”** (1 John 4:9).

But He had to be sent into the world for Him to be not only our Creator and God, but also our brother. He is the **incarnate** Son of God. We read of this also in Paul’s epistle to the Galatians.

Galatians 4:4-5 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

He was born of a woman, born with flesh and blood, so that He could be our flesh and blood brother. He was born of a woman so that He could serve as our substitute under the law, not only fulfilling the law’s demands for us, but also enduring the law’s curse for us.

And so He was our brother by being **“born of the Virgin Mary,”** and as our brother **“He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.”** (Apostles’ Creed)

All this so that He could present us as His brothers and sisters before the throne of God. It is simply amazing that He was not ashamed to call us His siblings, to own us as His family in spite of our sin. And that is where the concept of sanctification comes into the picture. He made us holy by separating us from our sin and its filthiness. He is the sanctifier, we are the recipients of this act of salvation. And the resulting blessing is that we are His brothers and sisters. He made it possible for us to be included in the family of God not by birth, for that was excluded by our sin, but by adoption. God adopted us as His children, because Jesus came to be one of us, redeemed us, sanctified us, and called us His brothers, and presented us as His brothers before the throne of God. Amazing grace! An amazing salvation.

For this blessed result to be concluded it was necessary --

III. To Deliver Us from the Bondage of Death.

Hebrews 2:14-15 Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

Jesus had to die! He became flesh and blood so that He could die. It wasn't a death wish. It was a desire to vanquish death, to defeat the enemy that held onto the power of death, that is the devil. Jesus came to destroy the devil and his power over us. That power came with our sin. The devil pushed that fear of death right down our throats when he deceived Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.

God had warned them that if they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, in that day they would die. They ate and they died. They were instantly alienated from God who was their Creator, with whom they had had an intimate relationship. They immediately lived in fear, the fear of God, the fear of death. Sin spoiled things so there was only death left. Death even in this life. Death at the end of one's temporal life; death that led to eternal death in hell. There was much to fear, and sin and guilt combined to give the devil leverage over every aspect of human life and behavior, to manipulate man as he willed for his amusement, and man's everlasting demise and suffering.

Then the Son of God came down to earth in our flesh and blood. Jesus shared our flesh and blood so that He could unravel the devil's treachery and deliver us from the fear of death. He died so that He might go before us, not only into the grave, but from the grave. By dying and rising again the third day Jesus made resurrection to life a reality for mankind, indeed He made the resurrection to glory and everlasting life in heaven **ours** through faith in His name. The devil is defeated and we are free from a forced servitude to the devil in which all our actions, even our best and kindest deeds had been vain and had been corrupted by our sin.

Now in Christ we live to serve Him who came to bring us grace and every blessings and to restore us to that intimate and loving

relationship with God in which we know Him as our Father , and we are His children now and forevermore.

And that is the real and wondrous reason why Jesus had to die. In the greatness of His love toward us He endured the cross, and suffered death, that He might bring us as His brothers and sisters into the glory of heaven.

AMEN.

And the peace of God which passes all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.