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St. Paul's Lutheran Church
2100 16th Street SW
Austin, MN 55912-1749
Pastor Ted Barthels
Sermon preached on
April 2, 2021
Good Friday

Responsive Reading: Psalm 22:1-19
Passion History: Jesus' Death and Burial
Hymns: 171:1,2,,4,6; 172:1-4; 153; 172:8

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

Sermon Text: 1 Peter 1:18-21a

“Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, *like* silver or gold, from your aimless conduct *received* by tradition from your fathers, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. ²⁰ He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you ²¹ who through Him believe in God.” (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: It's All About Our Redemption --

In our Good Friday service, we expect to come to the climax of our Lenten meditations, and that is what we do. When we think about our redemption on Good Friday, we turn our eyes to the cross of Calvary. It is there at the cross that we see exactly what price was paid for our redemption. In our profession of faith this evening Luther expressed this climax of the gospel succinctly, “*He has*

redeemed me, ... not with gold or silver, but with His holy precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death.” (Small Catechism, 2nd Article of the Apostles’ Creed)

On this Good Friday we consider this gospel truth as the Apostle Peter presents it by inspiration. May the Holy Spirit lead us to a deeper appreciation of this sacred truth:

THEME: He Redeemed Me through His Innocent Sufferings and Death.

--We need to start with understanding that we are --

I. Not Redeemed by Our Aimless Conduct.

The world doesn’t see its conduct as being aimless. It sees its spiritual conduct as being very directed. The idea that we can redeem ourselves by our conduct is deeply ingrained into the consciousness of fallen man. It is so deeply ingrained into man’s natural mind that the child of God must be on constant alert lest we slip back into this wrong thinking that by trying hard to be good, and by trying hard to be nice, and by maybe making some monetary gift to the Lord, and maybe donations to other charities we will gain assurance that we will be granted admission into everlasting life in heaven. This is one of the “gottcha” questions that appears in many lessons in our Catechism workbook. It’s there and time and again, and younger beginning students will fall for that wrong answer time and again. It is so engrained in our human minds and in our American culture.

Well, that doesn’t change when people get older and farther away from their Catechism instruction. If we aren’t diligent in keeping ourselves in the truth we will, we absolutely will slip into thinking that *“The fine things I do, and the gifts I bring to the Lord must contribute something to my salvation, - otherwise what’s the point?”*

See what I mean? Natural man thinks these false ideas, be it serving idols, or trusting in the merits of ancestors, or trusting our own good works, all are considered well directed behavior, when in fact this is all *“aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers,”* (v.18) We were not redeemed with corruptible things like

silver and gold! Natural man doesn't even want to admit that silver and gold are corruptible. How can silver or gold redeem us to the Creator of all things, including of course all the silver and gold. It is all fanciful imaginings of the corrupted human mind and heart.

We are --

II. Redeemed By the Precious Blood of Christ.

Peter starts by emphasizing what makes Christ different, what makes Jesus precious. He is as a Lamb without spot. The congregations Peter was addressing with his epistles were mixed congregations with many Jewish Christians who had shared the gospel with their gentile neighbors. So, there was a better familiarity with Old Testament ceremonial law than what we may have among us. Old Testament sacrifices were symbolic of the Christ that was to come into the world. Because of that every lamb that was brought to the Lord as a sacrifice was required to be without spot or blemish of any kind. It had to be perfect. The picture was clear. The Christ was to be perfect, unlike the rest of us who have many spots and blemishes in our character, staining our consciences with guilt. Jesus was different. Jesus is pure and holy. Jesus, and only Jesus was born into this world without the taint of sin and its corrupting power. Only Jesus could be that perfect offering to God for the sins of the world.

We are redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. Here we need recall that important fact we confessed this evening, that *“Jesus Christ is true God, begotten of the Father eternity, and also true Man born of the Virgin Mary.”* As sure as Jesus was and is true man it is necessary for our salvation that He was and is true God, God from all eternity. It is the divine nature of Jesus that makes that blood shed for us upon the cross precious enough, indeed infinitely precious, that Jesus' blood could redeem the whole world.

Again, it is essential to our salvation that Jesus be true man, that He might die, and die in *our* place, bearing *our* guilt so that the words of the prophet be true for us. *“But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.”* (Isaiah 53: 5) We were redeemed by His innocent

sufferings and death. All that Christ endured, from the anguish of Gethsemane, to the cruel abuse at the hands of sinners, the inhumane punishment of scourging that tearing at His flesh from His body, to the torture of crucifixion, all the blood and bitter pain that He endured was the price of our redemption. The agony, the bitter suffering that is what redeemed us from sin and death. It redeemed US, because it was the blood of the Son of God.

It redeemed us because there was something more, something deeper, something more extreme endured by Christ. That something more was what led Jesus to cry out those words prophesied by David in the 22nd Psalm which we read this evening; *My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?* (Psalm 22:1, Mark 15:34) And so we also recall these words of Isaiah: *Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. ... And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.*" (Isaiah 53:4,6)

This didn't just happen. In fact it wasn't something that God had to quickly figure out along the way. One of the wonders of our salvation is that we were -

III. Redeemed According to God's Eternal Plan in Christ.

1 Peter 1:20-21 "He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you ²¹ who through Him believe in God."

What this tells us is that God knew His perfect creation would be spoiled by sin, by man's sin. God knew this before He created the world. Before the foundations of the world were laid God's plan of redemption in Christ Jesus was set in place. Jesus was foreordained to be the Savior of the world. This was the basis of the promise made to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, a promise confirmed again and again to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that the Savior would be born among their descendants, and in their Seed all the nations of the earth would be blessed.

This wondrous promise of grace was quickly disregarded by many, and so lost to the world, but God is faithful. The Christ was born into the world. All was completed just as God had planned and promised. And the world was redeemed by the precious blood of Christ.

The promises had been entrusted to Israel, but what was hidden for so long was that this gospel was to go out into all the world. Jesus Himself sent the disciples out saying: *“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. ¹⁶He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.”* (Mark 16:15-16)

Paul spoke of this as the mission assigned to him by the Lord. *“By revelation He made known to me the mystery ... ⁵which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: ⁶that the **Gentiles** should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel.”* (Ephesians 3:3-6) We, the people of the gentiles are to be heirs of eternal salvation. **WE** have been redeemed by Christ the crucified. **WE** have been called to faith by the working of the Holy Spirit working through this message of redemption in Jesus **our** crucified Savior.

Our text concludes that we believe in the one true God because and only because we have been brought to God through Jesus. On the night He was betrayed Jesus told the disciples, *“I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”* (John 14:6) So it is by grace through faith in Christ that we have been brought to know the only true God, and have peace and life through Jesus’ name.

It’s all about our Redemption! And for that we shall always praise the Lord for this wonder of grace in Christ Crucified.

“Then, for all that wrought my pardon,
For Thy sorrows deep and sore,
For Thine anguish in the Garden,
I will thank Thee evermore,
Thank Thee for Thy groaning, sighing,
For Thy bleeding and Thy dying,
For that last triumphant cry,
And shall praise Thee, Lord, on high.” (The Lutheran Hymnal
151:7)

AMEN.

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