



Crisis at the Cross!

Matthew 27:45-46

Sermon given on April 10, 2020

Calvary Chapel French Valley

Good Friday Service

@ Remotely via YouTube from Rick's home because of coronavirus crisis

Pastor Rick Lancaster

CRISIS AT THE CROSS!

Matthew 27:45-46

SCENE: Service Countdown – 15 minutes prior to start of service

At beginning of service: SCENE: Worship

Sources ON: PowerPoint & David

At end of Worship – David prays – Turn on – IMAGE – Title Slide – C920 – Blue Yeti

- **SLIDE 54**

After David prays – Turn off – IMAGE – Title Slide - David Greeting

- **SLIDE 55**

- Hello, I am Rick Lancaster - Welcome to Calvary Chapel French Valley's Good Friday service
- Much of the world is in the midst of a crisis
- It is not the first crisis the world has faced, and it is not going to be the last one

- **SLIDE 56**

Crisis – A time of difficulty, trouble, or danger.

- Everyone has faced a crisis at some point in their lives
- Last year my mother had a stroke and subsequently went to be with the Lord
- That was a crisis for me and my family
- The COVID-19 crisis has been more of an inconvenience for our family than it has been a crisis
- That may change, but we do know people who have been seriously impacted by this crisis
- And this week someone I am connected to online shared that their mother passed as a result of the virus
- A crisis has a way of revealing what is inside of us
- I learned a lot about myself (and am still learning) as I go through the process of missing my mom
- A crisis will reveal the good and bad in someone – their strengths and weaknesses – their faith or lack thereof – we have seen a lot of both in the last couple of months

- We have witnessed acts of kindness and generosity and sacrifice
- And we have seen people trying to take advantage of others during this crisis
- We are hearing reports of increasing marital and child abuse, as well as increased drug and alcohol abuse
- And sadly, a crisis can be the last straw that breaks someone
- We live in Menifee – a city that doesn't get into the news very often
- On Monday a man killed three members of his family and then himself
- We don't know what led to this tragedy
- We don't know if this act was a result of the COVID-19 crisis
- This man was faced with a crisis and didn't have what he needed to safely get through it
- **SLIDE 57**
- We are all in this crisis and we all need to know how to get through it
- And not just get through it, but flourish through it
- What we need is found right here in this event that we call Good Friday
- Let's pray and then get into our message for this evening
- **Pray!**
- **Turn on Title Slide**
- **SLIDE 58**
- **Turn off Title Slide**

Teaching

- **Crisis at the Cross!**
- Turn to **Genesis 2**
- Every year on the first Sunday after the first full moon following the Vernal Equinox churches around the world celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ
- The secular world has commercialized this as Easter Sunday
- The Friday before Easter, or Resurrection Sunday, is called Good Friday
- It remembers the event that gives Easter Sunday its significance
- We gather on Good Friday to remind ourselves that Jesus died on a cross and what that means for the world

- It is also a time to reflect on what that means to each of us individually
- Because most of the people who come to a Good Friday service are believers, we will spend more time on reflecting on the meaning of the cross
- We will end that time of reflection by partaking of Communion together
- All four gospels describe the crucifixion of Jesus Christ
- Those four gospels record seven things that Jesus said from the cross
- We are going to focus on one of those sayings
- But before that, why was Jesus on the cross
- It goes all the way back to the very beginning – to the Garden of Eden
- **Genesis 2:8-9; 15-17**
- God put Adam and Eve into a garden with everything they could possibly ever need – and they could enjoy it to their heart's content
- All they were told to stay away from was one tree
- You may know how that story goes – the devil in the form of a serpent deceives Eve and she eats the forbidden fruit & Adam
- **Genesis 3:6-7**
- Anytime someone does something that is opposite of what God wants, it is called sin – we all do it **SLIDE 59**
- **Romans 3:23**
- ...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...**
- What died in that moment was Adam and Eve's innocence
- They tried to cover their sin with fig leaves
- God knew that was not sufficient to cover their sin
- **Genesis 3:21**
- The teaches us that there is a price for sin **SLIDE 60**
- **Romans 6:23**
- For the wages of sin is death...**
- God is perfect and holy, and He created mankind to be in intimate communion fellowship as the objects of His love and grace
- And to enjoy that relationship, people must be like Him, perfect, holy, and innocent of evil

- And because all have sinned and are no longer innocent of evil, He allowed for a way for people be right with Him
- God loves all of His creation, but He loves mankind as His highest creation
- Because His highest creation was no longer innocent, He allowed for a time the sacrifice of an innocent animal so that mankind could be in relationship with Him
- And for thousands of years innocent animals had to be sacrificed so that mankind could be right with God
- But God had a plan so that no more innocent animals had to be sacrificed – but it required a perfect sacrifice, not of an animal but of a person – a very special person – someone who was innocent, pure, and perfect – just like God – it had to be a man who was God **SLIDE 61**

- **John 1:14**

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

- John the Baptist looked at Jesus and said: **SLIDE 62**

- **John 1:29**

Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

- Turn to **SLIDE 63** - **Matthew 27**
- As Jesus hung on that cross on that Friday almost 2,000 years ago, He was doing it as the pure, spotless sacrifice of God **SLIDE 64**
- **1 John 2:2**

He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.

- And now anyone who believes in Jesus and what He did on the cross has their sins and guilt taken away and they are promised eternal life in heaven
- Someone might be wondering what that has to do with the COVID-19 crisis
- **SLIDE 65**
- It is something Jesus said from the cross as He was dying for our sins
- During a crisis many people feel what Jesus says here
- Even before Jesus was cruelly nailed to the cross, He had endured more suffering than most could survive

- Jesus was crucified at about 9 am on Friday
- For three hours passers-by mocked and ridiculed Jesus, even the two men crucified on either side of Him
- And then something happens that gets everyone's attention
- **Matthew 27:45**
- The 'sixth hour' = noon – the brightest time of the day, suddenly as black as a moonless, starless night
- Try to imagine that – no streetlights coming on automatically
- No one is pulling out their phone and using their flashlight app
- There are no fires lit, because it is the middle of the day
- Something radical just happened and everyone knows it **SLIDE 66**
- **2 Corinthians 5:21**

For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

- In that moment God placed all the sins of the whole world upon Jesus
- And then He did something that made Christ's suffering almost unbearable – because God cannot look upon the sin He had placed upon His eternal Son, He looked away from Jesus
- For three excruciating hours Jesus hung on that crossing struggling to breathe while His soul ached to be back in the intimate fellowship with God that He had enjoyed from eternity past
- **SLIDE 67**
- And then He says what many people are feeling right now
- **Matthew 27:46**
- One thousand years earlier King David had been inspired to write those words predicting this moment in history
- It is not strange to struggle during times of crisis
- Christ in His humanity struggled with being separated from His heavenly Father **SLIDE 68**
- **Hebrews 2:18**

For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.

- It is not strange to ask questions during crisis like: "Is God mad at me? Why is God doing this? Where is God in this crisis? Has God abandoned me? Is God judging me, this country, the world?"

- The problem is that there are not easy and obvious answers to those questions
- And even if God did answer those questions, it probably wouldn't satisfy us
- **SLIDE 69**
- During crisis we need more than answers
- **What we need during Crisis!**
- What we need is **SLIDE 70**
- **Hope!**

Hope – The confident expectation of coming good!

- If you look toward the future or into a situation and see no possibility of good coming, you will be hopeless
- I can't imagine what brought that man to shoot his family and himself, but I would imagine you would have to be pretty hopeless to do something like that
- Hope is not something you can conjure up – at least not the hope you need during a crisis
- You can make yourself hope you are not going to get sick, but what happens if you get sick – what happens to your hope
- You can hope you won't lose your job, but what if you lose your job
- Jesus cried out to God, but not hopelessly – He knew what was coming in the future **SLIDE 71**
- **Matthew 16:21**

From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.

- Jesus knew He was going to die but then be raised to life eternal
- **SLIDE 72**
- Hope or hopelessness is a product of faith – based upon what is true!
- Not religious faith – everyone has faith **SLIDE 73**

Faith – What someone believes to be true and that determines thoughts and behaviors.

- Jesus knew the future – even though He was suffering – He wasn't hopeless – He believed
- In a crisis, we need to examine what we believe – it will produce hope or hopelessness

- If my hope is in not getting COVID-19 and then I get it, I'm going to have a hard time
- Listen, I hope I don't get it, but I don't know the future, so I don't put my hope in not getting it
- During a crisis, focus on what is true, not what you want to be true
- Hope and faith are intimately linked together
- To have what you need during a crisis you need a hope that is based on a faith that is really true
- And there is only one truth in the universe that will get you through any crisis, including COVID-19 – **SLIDE 74**
- **John 14:6**

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

- **SLIDE 75**
- Jesus is the way through any crisis
- He is the truth that produces hope to endure to the end
- Jesus lives, Jesus is life, and He gives life
- Jesus died on the cross, not just so that we could have eternal life, but also so that we could have hope in this life
- This life is going to have hard spots, there will be crisis
- COVID-19 is the current crisis – it will pass and eventually be replaced by another one
- But if we put our hope in Jesus – He will carry us through this storm and every other one that comes
- Not only that, He will cause you to flourish, even in the midst of the crisis – trust Him and watch Him do miracles in and through your life
- Whatever your crisis is, bring it to the cross of Christ – hope in Him, trust Him, and cling to Him – and He will carry you through it
- I am going to pray and then lead us in Communion
- **SLIDE 76**
- **Pray**
- **Turn on David – strums as I pray!**
- **Communion**