|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Matt 27:45-46 |  | Pinelands – 9am – 12/03/2023  (See Serm.174+190) (Serm1.053) |

**The Cross** has been **silent for a whole 3 Hours.....**

Jesus has said nothing, it has been dark…

Darkness… and… Silence

**THEN,** suddenly out of the quiet comes the **SHOUT...**

***“MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME.”***

It is the **CRY** of a *desperate, lonely, dying* man.

The Son of God has reached a breaking point.....

This is His greatest Suffering....

Even God, His Father, seems to have forsaken him.

A few interesting things to note about these Words…

**Firstly…** out of the seven words from the cross…

There are 2 where Jesus addresses his Father as ***‘Father’…***

**1st word*: “Father forgive them”***

**7th Word: *“Father into your hands I place my spirit”***

Implying an intimacy, a connectedness

Yet in this word, **4th Word**, Jesus calls out to **‘GOD’…**

Implying a perceived distance, ***NOT* as close**

**Secondly…** This word from the Cross is often linked to

**Psalm 22:1.**

Remembering that the Psalms were the prayer book of the Jews.

**When we do not know** ***what / how*** to pray…

A good place to go is to the ***Psalms.***

The Psalmist in desperation also cries out to God…

The words Jesus used…

***“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me.”***

**Thirdly… Of all the words** of the Cross…

These words were Shouted out…

They were a ***LOUD CRY*** of…

Anguish, Struggle, Pain,

Desperation,

***The CRY of a dying Man***

**The Cross** has been **silent for a whole 3 Hours.....**

Jesus has said nothing, it has been dark… **for 3 Hours**

Not only is it **physically Dark…**

***BUT…*** **Jesus** is in a **dark place…**

Let me remind you of the **Darkness** in which Jesus finds himself…

Jesus had been **tempted** to avoid the cross…

to disobey his Heavenly Father.

One of his disciples **sold** him for **30 pieces of silver…**

the price of a slave.

One of his closest friends **denied** knowing him.

The rest of his **disciples ran away** to hide in the shadows.

His **enemies mocked** him.

The **Soldiers beat** him.

They **whipped** his back until his skin was raw and bleeding.

A **crown of thorns** pierced his scalp.

**Nails punctured** his hands and feet…

crushing bones and pinching nerves.

***BUT*** **worst of all…** **God seems to have turned his back on his son.**

***AND…***  It is under this **DARKNESS…**

Jesus cried out, ***“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?!”***

**Darkness is not a stranger to us…** *(ESKOM often keeps us in the dark)*

Seriously though… **We are No strangers** to **DARKNESS**

We have all had **DARK times** in our lives and in our world…

**Persecuted Christians…**

around the world facing prison or even death must wonder…

*God, why have you forsaken me?!*

**The Abused Wife…**

feeling trapped and alone cries herself to sleep asking,

*God, why have you forsaken me?!*

**Parents keeping vigil over a child…**

fighting a deadly cancer can be heard to question…

*God, why have you forsaken me?!*

**The retired couple whose savings disappeared…**

worrying about their future as they have doubts ask…

*God, why have you forsaken me?!*

**The Addict…**

to alcohol, or drugs or work cries out for freedom and wonders… *God, why have you forsaken me?!*

**Victims** of violent crime, gender based violence, injustice, all ask…

*God, why have you forsaken me?!*

**Many of us…** Know **DARKNESS…**

Facing illness and struggle

Grieving the loss of a life-long partner

The break-up of relationships…

Children who live soo far away

**We feel…** God has left us because of our circumstances

**What is your DARKNESS?**

**BUT -** it is because of Jesus on the Cross.......

That even though we feel forsaken.....

That even though we feel lost, alone, desperate...

**God is still there.**

**Martin Luther**, in light of this verse, said,.....

**“God, a forsaking God?**

**What kind of a thing can that possibly be?”**

**Jesus’ Words from the Cross…**

***“My God, My God, Why Have You Forsaken Me.”***

**Raises for us a** **Major Contradiction...** **a deep Mystery**

***How can God abandon God ?***

***How can our TRINITARIAN God… not be Trinitarian?***

***How can GOD… Not be true to himself?***

**This is the CROSS…** The **APPEX** of our Faith…

**JESUS is both…** **Fully Human** *and*  **Fully GOD…**

Therefore he has all the same feelings we have…

*Desperation, Anguish, Abandonment, Forsaken.*

That is what… Jesus **FEELS** in His Darkest Hour *(on the Cross)*

Jesus **PRAYS** in His Darkest Hour *(on the Cross)*

***BUT…*** in ***NO WAY*** had God Abandoned his SON

We **DO NOT**… understand it....

There is Mystery, Confusion, Contradiction.

***BUT…*** In that Mystery, Confusion, Contradiction

**Jesus… GOD…** Takes on **ALL** the **sin of the world**

**God bears the burden** of **ALL** **our sin**

So Christ ***CONQUERS*** Sin… on the Cross

So Christ ***CONQUERS*** your and my sin… on the Cross

**In that…** **LIES THE HOPE OF OUR SALVATION !!!**

**NO DARKNESS** **can ever *SEPARATE* us from** **GOD**

In the **DARKNESS…** Of Calvary,

Of Christ’s experience,

Of the CROSS…

**LIES OUR HOPE OF SALVATION**

PINELANDS METHODIST CHURCH

12 March 2023 Virtual

Welcome

Prayer

Sing - Blessed be your name (Matt Reddman)

*(Reading followed by saying lord’s Prayer together)*

Reading Matt 27:45-46

Say Lord’s Prayer

Sermon

Sing - It is well with my soul

Benediction