



Mary Craig Ministries

March 2016 Good Friday Message

"What Love Does"

We talk a lot about the love of God. We talk a lot about Good Friday and Jesus dying on the Cross on behalf of those for whom He died to pay the penalty for sin as a substitutionary sacrifice. Yes, Jesus died in our place as sin-bearer, curse-bearer, and bearer of the wrath of God. Yes, *God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. (2 Corinthians 5:19)*

The Word of God tells us in *1 Peter 3:15: But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to everyone that asks you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.*

So as I prayed about the message for this Good Friday, what stuck in my mind was to let God's Word speak as to "What Love Does."

Hear the Word of the Living God and let these words sink deep into your hearts and minds.

And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good. (Genesis 1:31)

Then came Adam and Eve and the Fall. God judged, but in the midst of judgment, we find God's love initiating a solution.

And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; it shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel. (Genesis 3:15) This first promise of the gospel refers to enmity between Satan and his seed and the Woman and her Seed. It is through judgment that deliverance comes.

God relates to mankind through covenants. He remembers His covenant. His goal is, "And I will be your God and you will be My people." Though He needs nothing and is complete within Himself, God desires relationship with the Family which He will father.

I will be a Father to you and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty. (2 Corinthians 6:18 and 2 Samuel 7:14)

And so we come to the greatest demonstration of God's love.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only and unique Son, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life. (John 3:16) This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down His life for us. (1 John 3:16)

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For He chose us.... In love He predestined us to be adopted as His [children]. (Ephesians 1:3-5)

Isaiah 53 New King James Version (NKJV)

53 Who has believed our report?
And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?
² For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant,
And as a root out of dry ground.
He has no form or comeliness;
And when we see Him,
There is no beauty that we should desire Him.
³ He is despised and rejected by men,
A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.
And we hid, as it were, *our* faces from Him;
He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

⁴ Surely He has borne our griefs
And carried our sorrows;
Yet we esteemed Him stricken,
Smitten by God, and afflicted.
⁵ 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.
⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray;
We have turned, every one, to his own way;
And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

⁷ He was oppressed and He was afflicted,
Yet He opened not His mouth;
He was led as a lamb to the slaughter,
And as a sheep before its shearers is silent,
So He opened not His mouth.
⁸ He was taken from prison and from judgment,
And who will declare His generation?
For He was cut off from the land of the living;
For the transgressions of My people He was stricken.
⁹ And they^[a] made His grave with the wicked—
But with the rich at His death,
Because He had done no violence,
Nor *was any* deceit in His mouth.

¹⁰ Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him;
He has put *Him* to grief.
When You make His soul an offering for sin,
He shall see *His* seed, He shall prolong *His* days,

And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand.

¹¹ He shall see the labor of His soul,^[b] and be satisfied.

By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many,
For He shall bear their iniquities.

¹² Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great,

And He shall divide the spoil with the strong,

Because He poured out His soul unto death,

And He was numbered with the transgressors,

And He bore the sin of many,

And made intercession for the transgressors.

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+53&version=NKJV>

Greater love has no man than this, Jesus said, than a man lay down his life for his friends. (John 15:13)

From the Cross, Jesus clued the people in to what was happening. He quoted from the first line of Psalm 22.

My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? (Psalm 22:1; Matthew 27:46)

Matt Slick, President and Founder of the Christian Apologetics and Research Ministry, notes:

“Jesus quoted this Psalm in order to draw attention to it and the fact that He was fulfilling it there on the cross. Consider verses 11-18 in Psalm 22:

‘Be not far from me, for trouble is near; For there is none to help. ¹² Many bulls have surrounded me; Strong bulls of Bashan have encircled me. ¹³ They open wide their mouth at me, As a ravening and a roaring lion. ¹⁴ I am poured out like water, And all my bones are out of joint. My heart is like wax; It is melted within me. ¹⁵ My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaves to my jaws; And Thou dost lay me in the dust of death. ¹⁶ For dogs have surrounded me; A band of evildoers has encompassed me. They pierced my hands and my feet. ¹⁷ I can count all my bones. They look, they stare at me; ¹⁸ They divide my garments among them, And for my clothing they cast lots.’

The term, "dogs," was used by the Jews to refer to Gentiles (cf. Matt. 15:21-28). His heart has melted within Him (v. 14). During the crucifixion process, the blood loss causes the heart to beat harder and harder and become extremely fatigued. Dehydration occurs (v. 15). Verses 16b-18 speak of piercing His hands and feet and dividing His clothing by casting lots. This is exactly what happen as described in Matt. 27:35.

Psalm 22 was written about 1,000 years before Christ was born. At that time, crucifixion had not yet been invented. Actually, the Phoenicians developed it, and Rome borrowed the agonizing means of execution from them. So, when Rome ruled over Israel, it became the Roman means of capital punishment imposed upon the Jews whose Biblical means of execution was stoning. Nevertheless, Jesus is pointing to the Scriptures to substantiate His messianic mission.”

<https://carm.org/matt-slick>

When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished: and He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost. (John 19:30) The debt note of sin was paid in full.

For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit. (1 Peter 3:18)

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished. (Romans 3:23-25)

And hope makes not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commends his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. (Romans 5:5- 11)

Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that commits sin is of the devil; for the devil sins from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. (1 John 3:7, 8)

In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. (1 John 4:9, 10)

And this is the record: that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. (1 John 5:11, 12)

Jesus fulfilled all righteousness in a perfect, personal, perpetual obedience. He came that we might have life, and have it more abundantly. As curse bearer, sin bearer, and bearer of the wrath of God, He died on the Cross to pay the penalty for sin. He had no personal sin. He bore the sin of those for whom He died. He came as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. In Him is life. *As many as received Him to them gave He power to become the children of God, even to them that believe in His Name, who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. (John 1:12-14)*

While He was being betrayed, Jesus Christ instituted the New Covenant in His blood. Tonight we remember the Lord's death until He comes. We remember the price paid for our redemption. We remember that on our behalf, Jesus propitiated the wrath of God. He offered up Himself a sacrifice for sin, paying the debt note of sin, that we might have forgiveness. He loosed us from our sins He reconciled us to the Father. He made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself: by Him, whether things in earth, or things in heaven. (Colossians 1:20) He came to destroy the works of Satan and on the cross He spoiled principalities, and powers. He made a public spectacle of them openly, triumphing over them in it. (Colossians 2:15) He overcame bondage, alienation from the Father, sin and the guilt and

liability of sin. He overcame the wrath of God for offenses, cosmic treason, and rebellion against the Creator. He overcame Satan, the kingdom of darkness and the world system.

Let the Cross, an instrument of death, do its work, as we are called to follow the Lamb wherever He goes and to die daily. Let us join our woundedness to Christ's woundedness that we might be healed. Let us forgive one another just as in Christ God has forgiven us; and let us love one another. Let us be worthy receivers of the grace of Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit as we remember the Lord's death until He comes.

And then remember, that's not the end of His Story!

Taking the Gospel around the world and across backyard fences,

Mary Craig

Mary Craig, D. Min.

That I may win Christ, and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Paul, Philippians 3:8b-11.

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