

## Why Jesus Endured the Cross

Psalm 22:22-31

March 27, 2016

We come to our time in God's word this morning. I want to invite you to turn in your bibles to the twenty second psalm. We're gonna finish what we started last week in psalm 22 as we considered what Jesus endured on the cross. And you'll remember that as we looked at Psalm 22 in preparation for Passion Week, we looked back at that Psalm because Jesus had intentionally directed us there from the cross. He cried out from the cross, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Those are the words of his father, David, right, from the first verse of Psalm 22. What David wrote of in Psalm 22 is poetry, metaphor, figures of speech; depicted a very real situation, accurate to be sure, but still written in poetic style. But the sufferings that were portrayed in that psalm, Jesus experienced those sufferings in stunningly accurate detail.

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Just as an example of that, look at what's written in verses 14-18 of Psalm 22. It's psalmist says, "I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted within my breast; my strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my jaws; you lay me in the dust of death. For dogs encompass me; a company of evildoers encircles me; they have pierced my hands and my feet—I can count all my bones. They stare and gloat over me; divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots."

It's exactly what we read in the Gospel accounts regarding Jesus Christ. When you compare that with what actually happened to Jesus Christ on the cross, a thousand years after this was written, it's absolutely amazing. Jesus didn't manufacture all those details. He didn't pay off people to fulfill all the different points of prophecy. We have the free choices of sinful men, here, of many sinful men, religious secular authorities. It had conspiracies of individuals and groups. You had individuals acting alone. You had informed scholars, all the way down to the ignorant rabble of the mob. They all came together, converged at the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. It's amazing, isn't it?

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At the same time, it's amazing to realize that although Jesus did not manufacture the greatest trial of suffering that anyone has ever known, he wasn't a victim of it either. He gave himself up to the suffering of the cross. We realize that he did that to save sinners, sinners like you, like me. That was the plan of his Father that we read earlier out of Isaiah 53, to die as a substitute for our sins, to stand in the place of condemned sinners. Isaiah 53, again, "Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; he was stricken, smitten by God and afflicted. He was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all."

The weight of sins of all his people throughout all of time, throughout all of history, the burden of the guilt of their offenses against Holy God, yes, but his beloved Father, Jesus Christ carried all of that to the cross. Add to the grief of his suffering when he had every expectation that the father would deliver him from that hour, his father turned him over to the suffering instead. The Father gave him over to that. He poured out his full wrath for all those sins. He poured it all

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on his beloved Son. God had indeed provided for himself a lamb for the sacrifice. And he bled that lamb dry to pay for the sins of his people.

So we understand why Jesus cried out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" That entire psalm was on his mind as he went to the cross. He endured the cross. As he triumphed through the cross, that psalm was on his mind. He trusted God's Word even through this intense suffering. In fact, Jesus knew through his reading of other scriptures and his belief in the God who wrote the scriptures that God would ultimately deliver him from the cross, that he would go through the cross, and he would live, that he would endure.

According to Psalm 16:8-10, Jesus did believe that God would raise him from the dead. That psalm expresses Jesus' faith in clear detail. It says, "I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices; my flesh also dwells secure. For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption." Jesus believed that. He trusted

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God's Word, and he told his disciples on several occasions, he said, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after that, after three days, rise again."

His disciples didn't understand what he meant when he said it at the time. Not until after his resurrection did they understand, but Jesus understood from start to finish, all the way through. And he entrusted himself to his God, and he was rewarded for his faith. Jesus died on Friday afternoon, buried right away, as we read, by Joseph of Arimathea. He remained in that grave through Saturday and according to his confident expectation, his confident hope, God raised him from the dead on Sunday morning, the third day. God did not abandon his soul to Sheol. God did not let his holy one see corruption. God rewarded his faith with resurrection life.

Now we covered all of that last week. The sermon's online if you haven't had a chance to hear it yet. And I want to point out, we made a simple connection at that time. If Jesus endured the greatest trial ever known to mankind, and he did it by

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faith, by trusting God. You know what? We can endure our trials, too, which are trivial by comparison, right? We can endure our trials, also, by faith. His faith, his trust in God's Word, it's an example to us. His faith is instructive to us. It encourages us. We saw that through our brief exposition of Psalm 22:1-21. That was last time.

But there is something else we need to see in Psalm 22, which is at the heart of what took Jesus through the cross. It's this which propelled him toward the victory that he reached for. Jesus didn't endure the cross simply by gritting his teeth and through a cold, stoic faith in God, just bit the bullet of intense pain and unparalleled suffering. He wasn't a stoic. Jesus was instead quite the opposite. He was fueled in his faith by passionate desire. The writer to the Hebrews tell us to "look to Jesus, who is the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for," what? "the joy that was set before him." Right? "For the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross, despising the shame and is now in victory seated at the right hand of the throne of God."

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So Jesus looked through the suffering. He looked on the other side. He looked beyond the suffering to the joys that followed the cross. And that, beloved, is what we want to study this morning as we finish Psalm 22: to learn not just how Jesus endured the cross by faith, but why Jesus endured the cross. Yes, he trusted his father implicitly, but trusted him for what? Jesus trusted that what his Father held forth for him on the other side of the cross, it was worth it. It was worth it. That's a question we need to ask ourselves, as well, right? Do we believe that the pleasures of God are worth it? Are they worth waiting for? In a country like ours that's affluent in comparison with the rest of the world, has abundant prosperity that has access to any kind of pleasure, entertainment at the click of the mouse, at the drop of a dime, whatever it is, we can have it. We eat the food of kings all through a drive-thru, right? Well, depending on the drive-thru, I guess. But we eat very well.

There's so much here on offer, so much we can have access to in the land of opportunity. Are we willing to deny all that, wait for what God has in store? Are the pleasures of God worth it? Is it worth denying ourselves the pleasures of this life

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right now, getting what we want, to obtain instead the joy that God has in store for us? Jesus believed the words of Psalm 16:10. He believed those words applied to him personally, and rightly so. "You will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption."

The Apostles twice made mention of that reference right there in connection with Jesus Christ. Yes, that applies to him. And the final verse of that psalm tells us what he was after, what he was striving to obtain. The psalmist says, "You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore." Where is Christ seated now? At the right hand of the throne of God, right? "At your right hand are pleasures forevermore." What was he after? Pleasures forevermore.

Again, folks, do we believe that? Is the path of suffering and self-denial, to which all Christians are called, is that the pathway of life for all of us? We believe that the presence of God is fullness of joy. Well, Jesus did. And he calls us to join in him in also denying ourselves, taking up our crosses daily.



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That's just a metaphor for dying to ourselves, dying to the world. And to follow him through the suffering to the triumphant joys of eternal life. What joys? Well, follow along as I read the final verses of Psalm 22, starting in verse 21.

You may remember from last week we stopped in the middle of that verse. We split Psalm 22 verse 21 in half. That verse closes the prayer for deliverance that the psalmist prayed, but then the tone changes drastically. In fact, the verb tense changed right in the middle of the verse. There's a prayer at the beginning, "Save me from the mouth of the lion." And then the change of tone. It's no longer a prayer. He says, "You have rescued me from the horns of the wild oxen." So the psalmist here is pivoting, and dramatically. This is no longer a request. It's no longer a prayer. It's no longer a hope, "Save me." It's become a statement of fact. "You have rescued me." It's a done deal.

Jesus had prayed, "O, Lord do not be far off. O you my help come quickly to my aid." Well, God did not answer that prayer immediately, as we said. He put him through the cross. But he

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did answer that prayer ultimately by raising him from the dead. Resurrection was the answer to Jesus' prayer. And resurrection was the vindication of God's character because God had, once again, proven himself trustworthy. He proved himself to be faithful, to be reliable, to be a worthy reception of prayers like that. So while it wasn't the answer that we expected, it is a far greater answer, one we could have never anticipated. It's an answer that glorified God, that God raised his son from the dead, took him through the cross, raised him from the dead. Let's keep reading, verse 22, "I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will praise you: You who fear the Lord, praise him! All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him, and stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel! For he has not despised or abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, and he has not hidden his face from him, but has heard, when he cried to him.

"From you comes my praise in the great congregation; my vows I will perform before those who fear him. The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek him shall praise the Lord! May your hearts live forever! All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the

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nations shall worship before you. For kingship belongs to the Lord, and he rules over the nations. All the prosperous of the earth eat and worship before him shall bow all who go down to the dust, even the one who could not keep himself alive.

Posterity shall serve him; it shall be told for the Lord to the coming generation; they shall come and proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn, that he has done it.”

Now Jesus, he had this entire psalm on his mind while he suffered on the cross. And you say, look, just because he quoted the first verse of Psalm 22 doesn't mean he was thinking about the entire thing. Prove that point, Preacher. I appreciate the challenge. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to show you why I say that he was thinking about this entire psalm while he was on the cross. Do you know what the final word of Psalm 22 is? Take a look at it there in verse 31. “They shall come and proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn, that he has done it.” That verb translated, he has done it, it's the verb *asah*, which means, to do, to make, to accomplish. And the verb tense here is the perfective. It's the completed idea in the Hebrew. So we could translate this, He has done, or It is done, or simply, It is finished. Does that ring a bell? John 19:30

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tells us, "When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, 'It is finished,' and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit." So from the prayer at the beginning of Psalm 22, verse 1, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" to the triumphant proclamation at the very end, "It is finished," Jesus had Psalm 22 in its entirety on his mind.

Now ever since his resurrection, Jesus has been about the business to bring the joys of Psalm 22 into their final fulfillment. Why did Jesus endure the suffering of the cross? Why such pain? Why such agony? Why the rejection of his father, whom he expected to receive deliverance from? Well, it's all for the joy that was set before him, right? What joys? Well, there are several. Jesus endured the cross first of all, you can see this in your bulletin, Jesus endured the cross first of all to rejoice in the salvation of God. To rejoice in the salvation of God.

I don't know how many of you have experienced deliverance from grave danger, from a mortal threat in which your very life was in jeopardy. There's a feeling, once you're rescued from

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mortal danger, a feeling of relief. There's a jubilation, there, that is hard to describe. You literally feel like you escaped with your life in your hands, and you're humbled. It's what the psalmist says here in verse 21, "You've rescued me from the horns of the wild oxen." It's as if God has plucked him off of the very horns of that wild beast where he had been impaled, where he was waiting to die.

David knew what it was like to come to the brink of death. On several occasions, he'd come to the brink of death. He escaped from the very jaws of death. But Jesus, we know, experienced a far greater deliverance because he passed through the veil of death. He experienced a kind of deliverance that no one but him has ever known. The relief, the jubilation that Jesus has experienced, utterly without parallel because the nature of his suffering and his deliverance are utterly without parallel. It's a joy that Jesus looked forward to what? Sharing with his brothers.

Look at verse 22 again. "I will tell of your name." When he speaks of, the name of God, he's speaking of the character of

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God, all that God is, all that God represents. "I will tell of your name," of your character, "to my brothers. In the midst of the congregation I will praise you." You may remember, we read earlier in the Scripture reading of Matthew's account of the resurrection, that Jesus appeared first to the women after his resurrection, and he commanded them, "Go tell," what, "my brothers." My brothers, that refers, there, most immediately to the disciples, but Jesus considers all the redeemed to be his brothers, his sisters, his siblings. That's us, folks. You want more proof?

Well, the writer to the Hebrews tells us in chapter 2, "We see Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone, for it was fitting that he for whom and by whom all things exist in bringing many sons to glory should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering, for he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why he is not ashamed to call them," what? "Brothers." Brothers, saying, "I will tell of your name to my brothers," Psalm 22 verse 22, "I will tell of your name of your brothers; in the midst of your congregation I will sing your praise."

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The writer to the Hebrews recognizes the connection, there. Those who follow Jesus in faith, you know what? We are looking forward as well to the hope of resurrection, and get this, we will one day listen to Jesus tell the tale of his deliverance from death. In fact, we'll hear him as he sings the praises of God in the midst of the great assembly, the great congregation. I don't know about you, but I am looking forward with eager anticipation to hear Jesus singing! I believe there cannot be any sweeter sound than his voice, to hear our Savior sing songs of salvation.

They say God had only one Son, and he made him a preacher, right? Well, he also made him a worship leader. He won't only be singing about his own salvation. He won't only be singing about how God the Father delivered him from the horns of the wild oxen, from the very bowels of the grave but, and this is really incredible, he's going to call on us to share our testimonies of salvation. Take a look at verses 23-24, "You who fear the Lord, praise him. All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him. Stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel, for he has not despised or abhorred the affliction of the afflicted. He has not hidden

his face from him but is heard when he cried to him." That's Jesus commanding the praise of his people.

The reference to Jacob and Israel, they refer most immediately to Jesus' Jewish brethren, right, believing Jews who are physical descendants of Abraham, but you know what, this extends to all of us. Look down at verses 25-27. This joy belongs to all who believe, the Jew first, but also for the Greek. "From you," verse 25, "comes my praise in the great congregation; my vows I will perform before those who fear him. The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek him shall praise the Lord! May your hearts live forever!"

And look at this, verse 27, "All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations," the *goyim*, the Gentiles, that's us, "all the families of the nations shall worship before you." How does he mark them out? Not just Israel, but us, too; those who fear him, the afflicted, those who seek him from the ends of the earth, "all the families of the nations." You know what this anticipates, the final fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant, in which God



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promised Abraham, Genesis 12:3, "in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." On in Genesis 15:5, God brought Abraham, you remember, brought him outside, said, "'Look toward heaven. Number the stars if you are able to number them.' Then he said to him, 'So shall your offspring be.'" Jew and Gentile alike, all drawn in. It says that "Abraham believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness."

Those are the family of faith. Abraham's faith. A faith that takes God at his Word, just believes what he says. Those are the brethren in whose presence Jesus will sing. They are the ones he will encourage to join him in rejoicing and praising God for their salvation. And they are to praise, to glorify God, to stand in awe of him, why? Because we each have a story to tell of God's merciful salvation in our own lives, don't we? We can each testify to the fact that God has not despised or abhorred, at is says there, our afflictions. He has not hidden his face from any of us, but he has heard when any of us cry out to him. It takes humility to do that, doesn't it? The proud don't call out to God. The proud feel they can handle it on their own. The proud are self-assured. It's the humble, those who cry out to

him, who know their need, they are the ones that God is quick to rescue.

Our sufferings do not compare to what Christ suffered. We have endured very little by comparison to all that he endured for our sakes, right? But in the end Jesus wants to hear from all of us. Is that not amazing? He rejoices to hear each individual testimony of God's salvation, because all those testimonies of salvation are woven together in a fabric, a beautiful tapestry of the glory of God. And that's what all of this is about. In the end, when the fulness of God's mercy is known, it will vindicate all the faithfulness of God. It will all serve to glorify his name. Things that we can't make sense of now, then it's all going to weave together perfectly. The universe is going to be an unending echo chamber for all eternity of the glorious name of God, of his righteous character proclaimed in songs of praise by Jesus Christ and the congregation of his people.

You know what? There's a second joy that Jesus kept in the forefront of his mind as he endured the cross. He looked forward

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to the day when he would rejoice in the salvation of God, but second, and simply, he longed to rejoice in relationship with God. Salvation for us brings us into relationship, doesn't it? We're saved for God. We're saved to know him. Salvation is not just a get-out-of-hell-free card. Salvation is a know-God-for-eternity card. This is in close connection with the previous point, obviously, but it merits consideration on its own because there's emphasis, here, in the Hebrew. Take a look at verse 25 and 26, there's emphasis right here, it says, "From you," and there's emphasis there. "From you comes my praise in the great congregation. My vows I will perform before those who fear him. The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied. Those who seek him shall praise the Lord. May your hearts live forever!" As I said, everything flows out of that opening phrase, that prepositional phrase, from you.

David recognizes, here, in this situation, as Jesus also does in his situation, that God is the source of his praise. God is the reason for his praise, and there is a close relationship between the one giving praise and then the one receiving praise. They're joined together. God is the source of all joy and praise, and so Jesus praises his father. His father is both the

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reason and the source of his praise. He's the reason and the source of his joy. This is a testimony, again, once again, to the gracious wisdom of God, because he unites himself to his people in the joy of praise. We're brought together in unity and harmony with God. There's a unity and a harmony through praise between God and those who worship him in the outworking of a personal relationship.

Not only that, but notice how as Jesus joins in intimate fellowship with God, he turns and he joins other believers with him in that fellowship, calling them into the joy of personal relationship and mutual fellowship with God. There's a reference, there, to performing vows. Do you see that? You might wonder what vow David was performing, what he had on his mind or even what vow Jesus needed to fulfill, what he was thinking of as he thought about this on the cross. There's a clue, there, in the verb, to eat. The verb, to eat, it's the verb *akal*, which can refer to eating any meal, but in this reference, here, in this context, and often it's used in reference to eating a sacrificial meal, part of the Old Testament law and sacrifices. And that's what we're talking, here.

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It's a sacrificial meal that's connected to fulfilling vows. The worshiper, he brought his fellowship offerings to the temple, and he called others to join him in thanksgiving, in sharing the meal. So after laying the fat pieces on the altar that had been consumed by the fire, the priest, the offerer, those invited to the feast, they would together cook the remaining meat and eat that meal together. These are the vows of thanksgiving. These are the free will offerings of gratitude to God, simply because of the joy of God's person and character. All of it is offered in recognition of God's tremendous kindness, his deeds of kindness.

It's fascinating, isn't it, that Christ intends to bring us together to eat with him, to join in thanksgiving, in his celebration. He wants us there. But notice who Jesus invites. The great congregation isn't for everyone who would pretend devotion. This isn't for all church attenders. You say, I've been attending church for 30 years of my life. Well, that may be. It's not just for the outwardly religious. Those who join in Christ's fellowship meal are those who belong to God in personal relationship.

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They are those who fear God. As the passage says, they are, the afflicted, who, in spite of their affliction, their affliction doesn't drive them from God, but their affliction for the sake of God and his Word, it draws them to God. They seek God through affliction, and they praise him still. They are the ones who belong at this feast, just like Christ, just like their Savior. Notice verse 26, it's in the context of personal relationship. Those who recognize that it's "from you, God, from you that my praise comes." They find sustenance. They find satisfaction. They find joy forever. It says there that "they eat and are satisfied. They seek him and they praise." Jesus prays, "May your hearts live forever." Specific. Their hearts.

John Calvin said, "One meal could not have sufficed to make their hearts live forever." Obviously, you need to eat again, right? "One," har, "one meal could not have sufficed to make their hearts live forever. It was rather the hope which they entertained of having ready succor from God which did this, for all the faithful justly reckoned the deliverance of this one man as a deliverance wrought for themselves in particular." In other words, for those who've hoped in God, for those who are characterized by finding all their sustenance and all their

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satisfaction in God, they and they alone are those who will know the joys of personal relationship with God for all eternity. "May your hearts live forever." And all this because of the faithfulness of Christ. All of this through the power of his resurrection.

Well, in the passage, here, there's a change as the psalmist shifts the attention from those who occupy this current congregation of those who believe and share in joy and praise. He turns our attention more broadly to those who do not yet belong to the company of worshipers. We mentioned this earlier, but there's an expansion here from Israel to the nations, to all the nations; more people are to be added to the number of those who rejoice in God's salvation. More people are to be added to those who participate in this fellowship of believers.

The psalmist, David, Jesus himself, looks , third, in your outline, number three, to rejoice in the sovereignty of God. To rejoice in the sovereignty of God. God is not just God of Israel, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, though he is not less than that. He is the God Most High. He's the God of the

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nations as well. Look at verses 27-29, "All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall worship before you. For kingship belongs to the Lord, and he rules over the nations. All the prosperous of the earth eat and worship; before him shall bow all who go down to the dust, even the one who could not keep himself alive."

That is an awesome passage, there, particularly for us in Greeley, Colorado, 2,000 years later, on the other side of the world, and 2,000 years forward in history because we're not Jews, most of us. We're not Jews; we're Gentiles. This pertains to us. The scope of praise expands from the national to the international, from the local to the universal. And the focus is that central line, there, in verse 28, Kingship or sovereignty, the right of absolute rule. "Kingship belongs to the Lord, and he rules over the nations." Although the scope expands, there is a sameness to God's ways with the nations. He treats all of us like he treats his beloved people Israel, and he treats Israel like he treats us.



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Now there is so much contained in these verses. We can only just mention some things, leave it to your future study, very rewarding study to trace these themes throughout the Bible. But first of all, notice the role of divine sovereignty in the way of salvation. The way of salvation. There in verse 27, salvation comes to all, how? By remembering, by turning, and then by worshiping, right? You say, How did the Gentiles, the nations, remember a God that they never knew? And I reply, Ah! But they *did* know God, didn't they? They did know him. All people everywhere know something of God. As Paul says, Romans 1:18 and following, people know some truth about God, but they have chosen to "suppress the truth in unrighteousness." They don't want to know about the God who created all things because they like their sin. Paul writes in Romans 1:19-20, "For what can be known about God is plain to them because," what? "God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived ever since the creation of the world in the things that have been made, so that," What? "they are without excuse." They may not know enough truth in their fallen condition to be saved through what's revealed in the universe and in creation. Even in their own bodies, even in the plant world, the animal world, they may not know enough in their fallen condition to be saved, but they do

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know enough to be accountable to God. What they do know, they've suppressed. They've reinterpreted it. They've denied. They've rejected outright.

Unbelievers, they reject moral absolutes all the while denying the moral absolutes that God inscribed on their hearts. They *live* by moral absolutes. It's fun to talk to a relativist, someone who says, Oh, all morality is relative, and then just reach into his pocket and take his wallet and walk away. All of a sudden, he becomes very absolute on you. You say, Hey, my morality says it's okay to take your stuff. They don't like that. Romans 2:14 says, "They live by God's moral absolutes by nature, doing what the law requires. They show," Romans 2:15, "that the work of the law is written on their hearts." But you say, Wait, I've talked with unbelievers, very reasonable people. They really *do* think they came from monkeys. They really do. They really believe in the eternality of matter. They say there's no evidence for God, but they're open to believing, totally open. They have an open mind if only there were some evidence. There are no moral absolutes. All truth is relative. Laws are merely social constructs; they're agreed upon for the

evolutionary advancement of society, and other such things they say, right?

You know what? They may say that, but listen, the Bible just told you, God has shown them the truth, and they've suppressed it. "His eternal power and divine nature are clearly perceived," and they know that, "so that they are without excuse." The Bible says that "their conscience," which you can't see, by the way, but which God can see, "their conscience bears witness. Their conflicting thoughts accuse or else excuse them." So let me ask you a question. Who are you going to believe? Will you accept God's testimony about the unbeliever's thought life? Or will you prefer to accept the testimony of an unbeliever, someone who is morally committed to their own rebellion against God? That person is biased. That person operates on an unbelieving set of presuppositions, and they reject, morally, in their hearts, what you're bringing to them. So why would they admit it to you?

That person, an unbeliever, cannot think objectively until God gives him grace, and in his gracious sovereignty, God

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regenerates the sinner, whether it's a Jewish sinner or a Gentile sinner. And he causes that person by the working of his Holy Spirit to remember the God that he has suppressed, to remember the God that he has rejected. And once that unbeliever remembers, you know what he does? He repents. He puts his faith in God. The word translated, turn, there in verse 27, "The ends of the earth shall remember and turn," that is the Hebrew verb *shuv*. *Shuv*, which forms the basis for the concept of repentance. You know what repentance is? Very simple. Repentance means you're thinking and living in one direction, and then you turn 180 degrees and think and live in the opposite direction. That's repentance. And all who come to God, if anyone comes to God, it is always and only through the grace of repentance. The evidence of repentance is a changed life, or I should say maybe a changing life, a growing, a transforming life, and that's summarized by that third term, this process of sanctification, that third term in verse 27, "All the ends of the earth shall remember, they shall turn," or repent, "to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall," what? "worship before you," becoming true worshipers of God, becoming zealous for obedience, zealous for good works, zealous to obey the Lord. That is the mark of genuine repentance and true salvation. Look, there's so much more to say on that, but this is God's way of salvation.

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It's his sovereign way of salvation with all of us. We need to keep moving, though.

Jesus rejoices in the sovereignty of God not just in the way of salvation, remembering, repenting, worshipping, but also in the universality of salvation. And we see universality in two ways. There is an ethnic sense in the universality of salvation. That is Jew and Gentile, all the families of the earth. And there's also an economic sense of this universality. We might call this a social equity in God's sovereign salvation. And say it another way, God is impartial. He shows no favoritism to the kinds of sinners that he saves. I'm so grateful for that, aren't you? There's no ethnic or social or economic preference. God saves whoever comes to him in repentance and faith. Notice verse 29 again, "All the prosperous of the earth eat and worship; before him shall bow all who go down to the dust, even the one who could not keep himself alive."

There are those who are the prosperous of the earth. They're the wealthy. But even they put no trust in riches. They turn from their wealth, and they don't trust in their wealth.

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They trust in God. God has granted them means; he's increased their wealth. And it's his prerogative, his sovereign right, to do so, right? They turned away from money, though, to eat at God's table, to worship in the great congregation. There is no communism in the Bible. There is no radical egalitarianism that tries to level the playing field with every single person. No. God gives more to some and less to others, and that's his sovereign right to do that. It says the rich are joined at the table by those who have no means, "those who go down to the dust." This is talking about those who can't keep themselves alive. They're truly destitute. They're poor. They are poverty stricken. But God brings them to the table. He levels the playing field at his table. Money doesn't earn someone a place at the table, but neither does it need to hinder them even if it is "hard for the rich to enter the kingdom of heaven." Jesus said, "It's harder for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of heaven." But Joseph of Arimathea buried Jesus, didn't he? He was a rich man, and Jesus was buried with the rich.

Money isn't only a problem for those who have it. Sometimes it's the poorest sinner who has the greatest love for money,

isn't it? God is sovereign over rich and poor alike. He's sovereign over wealth, distributing more to some, less to others. But no matter who they are, rich or poor, slave or free, all must come to God in the same manner, by the same process of remembering and repenting and then bowing low in worship. If you don't do that, you don't come. God saves the meek and only the meek. Meekness doesn't correspond to figures in the bank account. But neither is it hindered by the lack of figures in the bank account. The good news is that this Gospel of Jesus Christ, which was secured eternally by his obedience, the reward for his obedience, the resurrection from the dead, there's a universality to this Gospel. All may come. It's for rich and poor alike. All those whom God will sovereignly save, they will all rise again.

We talked about the way of salvation, here, the universality of salvation, all determined by the goodness and the grace of a sovereign God, right? I'd just like to move on, but I can't leave this point without showing you something very significant, a vital connection between the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the joy of Jesus Christ in the glorification of the absolute, without question the absolute sovereignty of God.

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Just quickly, turn over to 1 Corinthians 15. I read from this earlier. 1 Corinthians 15 and I want to look at starting in verse 22. 1 Corinthians 15:22. Jesus rejoices in the absolute sovereignty of God because it puts the greatness of God, his kingship over all the earth, over all the nations, that puts God's greatness on display.

To proclaim the sovereignty of God is to put God in his rightful place, and this is something Jesus rejoiced in even before going to the cross, but all through the cross, after the cross, to see God in his rightful place as sovereign over all. It's a joy that Jesus anticipated and one that carried him through the suffering of the cross. It's one of the reasons that he endured the cross. So notice what Paul reveals, there, about the consummation of the age, starting in verse 22. "As in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive, but each in his own order, Christ the first-fruits and then at his coming those who belong to Christ."

Now that's, they're just talking about the order of those who are raised from the dead. All those in Adam, if you remain



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in Adam, you die. Those who are in Christ, though, all of them shall be made alive. And then notice what happens in verse 24. "Then comes the end, when he," that is, Jesus, "delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. 'For God has put all things in subjection under his feet.' But when it says, 'all things are put in subjection,' it is plain that he," that is, Jesus, "is excepted who put all things in subjection under him. When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all."

I realize that's a mouthful, but this is what Christ is looking forward to; when all things are in subjection to God as the absolute sovereign of all. He longs to see the practical, the functional, the actual sovereignty of God acknowledged by all. No more rebellion, no more sin, no more unbelief, and no more death, either. All will be rightly related to God whether they are suffering eternal destruction. Even in hell they will acknowledge God as God along with all rule, authority, and

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power. Those rulers and authorities and powers that deny the sovereignty of God, they will one day bow.

Also, those of us who enjoy eternal life, we'll be rightly related to God, finally, right? These are the ones Jesus calls brethren, the members of the great congregation. So one day even death, this instrument of God to punish the ungodly, even death will be banished, having served its purpose. Heaven and earth will be finally put to rights, and God's sovereign place will be acknowledged by all. Listen, Jesus rejoices in that as do all of us who will be raised in his resurrection life. We long to see God in his rightful place, don't you? Are you tired of seeing terrorists rule the world, cause fear? Five days ago they blew up Brussels. Before that it was Paris. In fact, I was reading one article that said that every single day, you can actually set a calendar now, every single day there is a terrorist attack somewhere in the world, whether it's Boko Haram, whether it's Isis, whether it's Al-Qaeda, whether it's, whatever it is, they're all over. Are you tired of seeing that kind of fear spread? Are you tired of seeing the death and the carnage? I am. You ready to see God rule?

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So Jesus rejoices in the salvation of God. He rejoices in a right relationship with God. He rejoices in the sovereignty of God. And he rejoices to bring the rest of us into that joy.

Let's consider a final point just quickly. While Jesus hung on the cross, even prior to his resurrection, he looked forward to a time of unbroken rejoicing, and that's your fourth point: to rejoice in the glory of God. To rejoice in the glory of God. It says in verses 30-31, "Posterity shall serve him. It shall be told of the Lord to the coming generation. They shall come and proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn that he has done it." The word translated, posterity, there, it's the word seed, which, as you know, you guys come from Greeley, there's farming around in this area, right? Seeds produce a certain kind of plant or fruit or crop, right? This seed you plant to get wheat. This seed you plant to get an apple tree. So the posterity, the seed, it's referring to descendants of like kind. All the same kinds of people. Jesus rejoiced in the generations of his people, who would join him in magnifying the glory of God his Father. These are those who are the seed of faith. These are the descendants of those who believe, those who trust God, those who follow Christ. Not natural, physical descendants. We know that people aren't born Christians. Descendants of faith, those

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who trust with the like faith of Abraham, the like faith of Christ.

Now think for a moment about this point from Jesus' perspective. Who is the one throughout all of human history who has known God best? I give you one guess. Jesus, right? Who is the one who loved God the most? Jesus. Who has the greatest appreciation for God's knowledge and wisdom, his justice and mercy, his power and his tenderness? Jesus, Jesus, and Jesus, right? And what Jesus rejoices in most is to share that love and appreciation that he has, that knowledge of the greatness of the glory of his father, with whom? He wants to share that with all of us, right? He wants us to join in with him in his rejoicing, in his celebration. He wants us from the depth of our souls to know and appreciate and love the glory of God in all his awesome splendor. Jesus loves his father deeply, intimately. He loves his father infinitely, and he wants us to share in that love. He wants us to share in that appreciation. Have you ever come to a sight, just traveling, come to a sight on this earth, and you look at it and go, Wow! That's God for all of eternity, to look at him and look in awe and wonder.

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Notice verse, 30, 31, there are three generations, there, listed. There's an initial generation of his posterity, followed by a coming generation, and they in turn proclaim and turn and tell about God's glory to a people yet unborn. That's a third generation. There's a cascading, here, of proclamation as generation after generation proclaims the righteousness of God. And remember, because of the resurrection, these generations continue to live. They are never silenced. Remember verse 26, "Those who seek him shall praise the Lord. May your hearts live," what? "forever." Right? No end. These generations never die. They continue living, and their chorus of their praise, it grows ever stronger, ever louder as more and more souls are added to increase the size of this congregation.

Listen, as one who loves the father deeply, with unequalled intensity, with unparalleled zeal, Jesus is absolutely thrilled about this. He's rejoicing in the glory of God, which is revealed through the plan, and is magnified in the telling and the re-telling of the story. Jesus rejoices in hearing the glory of God amplified through the praises of his people. What do we praise him for? His righteousness, the fact that he has done it. Done what? God has accomplished salvation for his people. 2

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Corinthians 5:19, "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them and," get this, folks, "he has committed to us the ministry," the word, "of reconciliation."

That's how we become a part of this, right? We're the fulfillment of Jesus' rejoicing. When we spread this Word, the joy that took him through the cross, we're a part of it. When he died on that cross, we were not members of that immediate posterity, right? We're members of the remote posterity, the 2,000 years remote. His immediate posterity, that's the holy Apostles. They served Christ by setting the foundation of the church, and that church is here called the coming generation. That coming generation, they continue proclaiming the righteousness of God in Christ, a proclamation that has worked its way throughout all of history to us, those who at the time were a people yet unborn. That's us. They told us; we tell others as well, that he has done it, that it is finished.

John Calvin again. This is a man who was one of the most significant church planters of his day. Sometimes people say,

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oh, John Calvin, he was against evangelism. Not true. Not true. Through his work in Geneva, he planted churches all through France, all through Switzerland. He was responsible at the time for clarifying and defending and proclaiming Gospel truth. He said, "It is by the preaching of the grace of God alone that the church is kept from perishing."

Continuing with Paul's words in 2 Corinthians 5:20-21, "Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ. As though God were entreating through us, we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. He made him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in him." Look, those are the joys that Jesus anticipated on the dark side of the cross, and they're the cause of his rejoicing even now, in his post resurrection ministry. Charles Spurgeon said, he put it this way, he said, "Sovereign grace shall bring out from among men the blood-bought ones. Nothing shall thwart the divine purpose. The chosen shall come to life, to faith, to pardon, to heaven. In this the dying Savior finds a sacred satisfaction."

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Like us, but to an infinitely greater degree, Jesus rejoices in the salvation of God. He rejoices in his relationship with God. He rejoices in the absolute sovereignty of God, and he rejoices in the glory of God. By his grace he enlists and empowers us to share in his joy along with him, to proclaim the righteousness of the God in the Gospel to our generation and to the next. That's our joy, beloved. That's the joy of resurrection life.

Let's pray. Father we are grateful once again as we hear the story of the Gospel, see it unfolded in this psalm. To remember that Jesus he didn't do this as a cold stoic but as a passionate zealot for your glory and for your joy. He sought the pleasures at your right hand and he is there now at your right hand enjoying all the pleasures of your presence, of your fellowship, of your communion. And father we along with him, we look forward to that joy as well. We look forward to all these joys of salvation glory, of resurrection life. We count it such a blessing to be in this company of those who have remembered, repented, and now worship. We commit ourselves to you once again in faith, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.